

Buffy

the vampire slayer™

OMNIBUS

VOLUME 7



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BRIAN HORTON
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FABIAN NICIEZA
JIM PASCOE
ERIC POWELL
JAMIE S. RICH
CLIFF RICHARDS
RYAN SOOK
TOM SNIEGOSKI

Based on the television series created by Joss Whedon.

These stories take place during Buffy the Vampire Slayer Seasons Five and Six.



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BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER™ OMNIBUS VOLUME SEVEN

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Buffy the Vampire Slayer #39–#42, originally published November 2001 through February 2002;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Chaos Bleeds, originally published June 2003;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Lost and Found, originally published March 2002;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer #43–#45, originally published April through June 2002;
Dark Horse Extra: Buffy the Vampire Slayer "Spike in 'Rock 'n' Roll All Night (And Sleep Every Day)!" originally published July through August 2002;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Willow and Tara, "Wilderness," originally published July and September 2002;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Reunion, originally published June 2002;
Buffy the Vampire Slayer #46, originally published June 2002;
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INTRODUCTION

The first story in this volume is a rare modern example of a story based on a cover. I commissioned the cover to "Night of a Thousand Vamps" from artist Jeff Matsuda, telling him to just have fun, and do whatever he felt like. This cover was done in case we needed it for solicitation purposes should the regular artist fall behind schedule. This was our safety net. The cover sat for a while, until I felt there was no need to keep something in the inventory drawer. I sent the cover to writers Jim Pascoe and Tom Fassbender and asked them to write a story. They even wrote in the bit with the one vamp staking himself (see page 7).

Next to come was the three-issue series "Ugly Little Monsters." The number three runs strong in the story—in the color schemes, the number of panels on a page, the number of characters in a scene ... every way we could think to play it up—even the number of words in the title.

Christopher Golden and Tom Sniegowski worked on scripting the *Buffy* game *Chaos Bleeds*, and came to me, on behalf of the game producers, to do a comic. It was also Chris who came to me, with Amber Benson, suggesting the two write some Willow and Tara comics together.

The work that Tom and Jim Pascoe had been doing on the monthly produced some of my favorite *Buffy* comics. When *Buffy* died on the show we wanted to tell a significant story set while she lay dead, and deal with her friends' decision to bring her back. I'd been talking to Fabian Nicieza about doing some *Buffy* work, and we decided to flesh out the "Death of *Buffy*" storyline by having Fabian write a spinoff, "Lost and Found." The original *Death of Buffy* trade paperback collected "Lost and Found" and Tom and Jim's "Death of *Buffy*" together, going so far as to mix the pages up to make one story. Here, we decided to separate them again, and to drop in other stories that didn't feature *Buffy*, to expand that time period when she was gone.

"Reunion" was another unique opportunity. When *Buffy* came back from the dead on the show, she ran off to meet up with Angel. In *Angel*, he ran off to meet *Buffy*. Neither show revealed anything about their meeting. Show writer Jane Espenson joined a who's who of *Buffy* artists and dug into that untold story.

As we blazed through Season Six, Tom, Jim, Paul Lee, and Brian Horton had teamed up for an illustrated *Buffy* novel, *Creatures of Habit*. One villain was left alive at the end of *Creatures of Habit*; and as Tom and Jim prepared to depart from the monthly comic, they tied up that loose end with Paul in "Withdrawal," their final *Buffy* story.

Scott Lobdell replaced the departing team, and pitched me a story that I liked, and once the idea was approved by our contact at Fox a first script was written called "Note from the Underground." But then Lobdell heard something through the grapevine—apparently Joss's plans for Season Seven were very similar to "Note from the Underground." I got a hold of Joss, gave him a quick rundown of the story, and he said, "Yeah, you probably shouldn't do that." Joss didn't necessarily see licensed material back then—as opposed to Season Eight, where every step goes through his hands.

We had to come up with another story. So the story in this book is "Note from the Underground." Take Two, and the mad scramble to complete the story led to the decision to follow it up by jumping out of continuity and throwing the series back to just before *Buffy* moved to Sunnydale, which is why there's no Season Seven stories in this final volume of the Omnibus series. The scramble also led Lobdell to bring Fabian in to help him make up for lost time. The "Year One" stories they went on to do with Cliff, and which Fabian and Cliff finished after Lobdell left the book, are collected in Omnibus Volume One—making this series a nice neat loop, a figure eight preceding Joss's own Season Eight. I hope you had more fun reading them than I did trying to pull that metaphor together.

Salt Allie

UGLY LITTLE MONSTERS 7

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& GUY MAJOR

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Script—TOM FASSBENDER & JIM PASCOE
Pencils—CLIFF RICHARDS
Inks—JOE PIMENTEL & WILL CONRAD
Colors—DIGITAL CHAMELEON
Letters—CLEM ROBINS

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Inks—JOE PIMENTEL & WILL CONRAD
Colors—DAVE MCCAIG
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Inks—JOE PIMENTEL & WILL CONRAD
Colors—DAVE MCCAIG
Letters—CLEM ROBINS

Ugly Little Monsters







MOM?

MOMMY?

...I'M REALLY
WORRIED ABOUT
TOMORROW.

WHAT HAPPENS
TOMORROW?

THAT'S
WHAT I DON'T
KNOW.

NIGHT of a THOUSAND VAMPIRES





HOW ARE YOU DOING? DO YOU NEED ANYTHING?



NO... I DON'T KNOW **WHAT** I NEED. THE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS PREPARING FOR THE FUNERAL--GOING THROUGH ALL THESE MOTIONS KEPT THE **REALITY** OF IT ALL FROM SETTLING IN. NOW THE UGLY REALITY--VERY SETTLED IN.

I'M SO SORRY, BUFFY. I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT--



HOW'S DAWN?

SHE'S FINE... WELL, THAT'S IF YOU CONSIDER "FINE" AS IN BITTER, CONFUSED, AND RESENTFUL. DARA AND I LEFT HER IN MY ROOM. SHE DIDN'T WANT ANY BREAKFAST GILES WAS GOING TO PICK HER UP--SHE'S PROBABLY AT THE MAGIC BOX NOW.



WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, WILLOW?



UM... DO YOU WANT TO COME TO SCHOOL? I MEAN SOMETIMES, WHEN I'M FEELING REALLY, REALLY DOWN I LIKE TO COME TO SCHOOL, EVEN IF IT'S LIKE SUNDAY, AND JUST HANG OUT.



NO. THAT'S OKAY. I CAN'T DEAL WITH SCHOOL FOR A LITTLE WHILE.



"YOU'LL BE SORRY," THEY SAID. "THAT GIRL WILL ONLY BE TROUBLE."

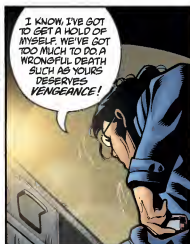
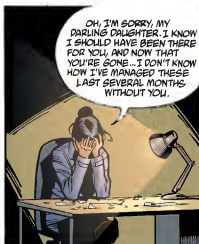


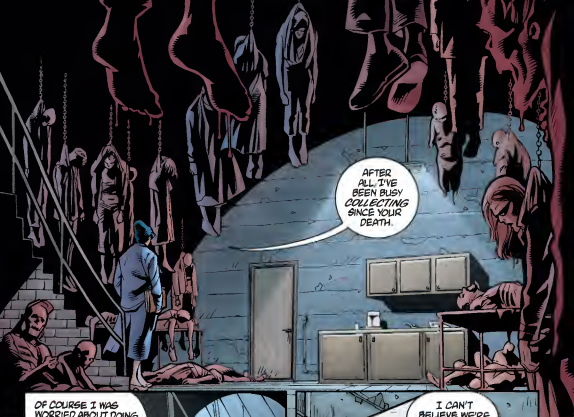
WELL, VERENA, MY DARLING DAUGHTER, YOU MAY HAVE BEEN TROUBLE, BUT NOW MY BABY IS GONE.



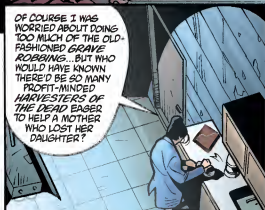
BUT I DIDN'T LOSE YOU TO DARK MAGIC; I DIDN'T LOSE YOU TO THE LUSTFUL DESIRE OF A VAMPIRE... I LOST YOU TO THE CARELESSNESS OF A VAMPIRE SLAYER!

CRACK





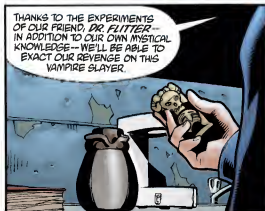
AFTER ALL, I'VE BEEN BUSY COLLECTING SINCE YOUR DEATH.



OF COURSE I WAS WORRIED ABOUT DOING TOO MUCH OF THE OLD-FASHIONED GRAVE ROBBING... BUT WHO WOULD HAVE KNOWN THERE'D BE SO MANY PROFIT-MINDED HARVESTERS OF THE DEAD EAGER TO HELP A MOTHER WHO LOST HER DAUGHTER?



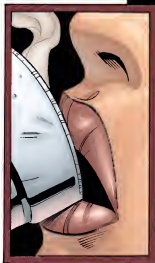
I CAN'T BELIEVE WE'RE OUT OF COFFEE.



THANKS TO THE EXPERIMENTS OF OUR FRIEND, DR. FLITTER-- IN ADDITION TO OUR OWN MYSTICAL KNOWLEDGE-- WE'LL BE ABLE TO EXACT OUR REVENGE ON THIS VAMPIRE SLAYER.



ONLY ONE MORE STEP, AND VENGEANCE SHALL BE OURS... BUT FIRST WE NEED TO REPLENISH SOME SUPPLIES.



I JUST WISH THERE WERE SOMETHING WE COULD DO FOR BUFFY.



I USUALLY FIND THAT A CAKE WITH NICELY WRAPPED AND THOUGHTFUL PRESENTS CHEERS ME RIGHT UP...OR IS THAT TOO MUCH A BIRTHDAY THING?

WE COULD THROW A PARTY.



WRONG. NOW IS NOT A TIME FOR CELEBRATION.

OKAY, OKAY. JUST TRYING TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX.



MAYBE WE SHOULD BE THINKING INSIDE THE BOX...Y'KNOW, NOT DO SOMETHING SO OVER-THE-TOP. SOMETIMES I...I KINDA LIKE THE BOX.



SO...A SINGING CHIPPENDALE STRIP-A-GRAM IS RIGHT OUT.





COME ON, GUYS, LET'S BE SERIOUS.

MAYBE THERE ISN'T ANYTHING WE *CAN* DO. WHAT IF SHE JUST NEEDS TIME TO ACCEPT AND MOVE ON?



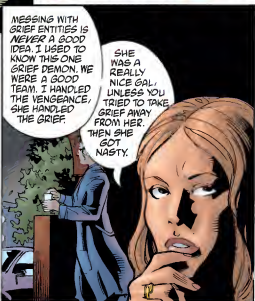
I GOT IT! *MAGIC!* YOU GIRLS ARE MITCHES --AREN'T THERE ANY "GET OUT OF GRIEF FREE" MAGIC MONOPOLY CARDS YOU CAN PLAY?



Hmmm... I COULD LOOK INTO THAT. THE INTERNET MIGHT HAVE SOME USEFUL--



WHY, WILLOW, I DON'T THINK THAT'S THE BEST IDEA.



MESSING WITH GRIEF ENTITIES IS NEVER A GOOD IDEA. I USED TO KNOW THIS ONE GRIEF DEMON. WE WERE A GOOD TEAM. I HANDLED THE VENGEANCE, SHE HANDLED THE GRIEF.

SHE WAS A REALLY NICE GAL, UNLESS YOU TRIED TO TAKE GRIEF AWAY FROM HER. THEN SHE GOT NASTY.



MAN, I NEED
HELP--I CAN'T
SLEEP, I CAN'T
EAT...



"GOTTA GET OUT OF THIS
HOUSE. MAYBE I JUST
NEED A GOOD SLAY TO
GET ME BACK IN THE GAME."



HELLOOO?
VAMPIRES?



EVEN THE
HELLMOUTH IS
QUIET--

--OOPS,
WHAT'S
THIS?



LOOKS LIKE A
LORD OF THE RINGS-
STYLE GARAGE DOOR
OPENER.
WHAT-EVER.

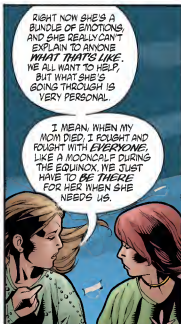


HMMMM,
I WONDER
WHAT IT
OPENS?





WAS THAT
ME WHO SAID
I WANTED SOME
ACTION?





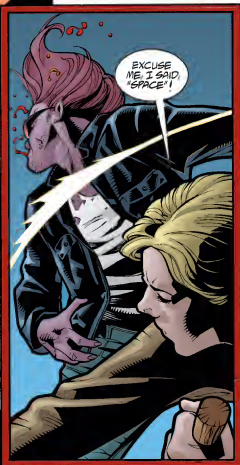
"SHE'S IN NO
SHAPE TO BE
HUNTING
DOWN VAMPIRES."



AS MUCH AS
I'M FLATTERED
HERE, PEOPLE
...YOU'RE ALL
NOT MY
TYPE



I MEAN,
PLEASE, A GIRL
NEEDS HER
SPACE!



EXCUSE
ME, I SAID,
"SPACE!"







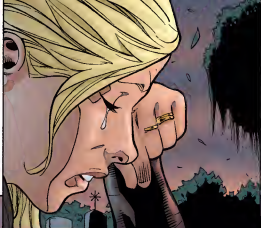
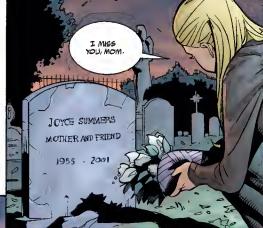






OH,
MOM...





A comic book panel showing three young women standing outdoors at night. The woman in the center has blonde hair and wears a blue jacket. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and wears a purple jacket. The woman on the right has red hair and wears a brown jacket. They are in a park-like setting with trees and a bench in the background.

REALLY,
GUYS, YOU
DON'T HAVE
TO PATROL
WITH ME

WE JUST
THOUGHT THAT
YOU'D LIKE THE
COMPANY, RIGHT,
TARA?

Ugly Little Monsters

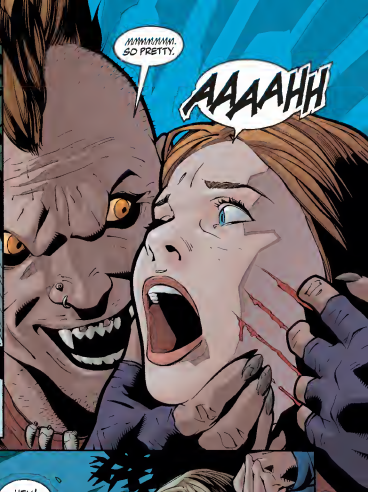
A comic book panel showing the same three women from the previous panel, now standing behind a low stone wall. The woman on the left is gesturing with her hands while speaking. The woman in the center has her arms crossed. The woman on the right is looking towards the speaker. The background shows trees and a dark sky.

YEAH,
WE FIGURED
IT'S ALL LONELY
OUT HERE
AT NIGHT,
AND --

COME ON,
YOU GUYS, I KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE DOING
AND I APPRECIATE IT.
YES, I'M SAD ABOUT
MY MOM, BUT IT FEELS
LIKE PATROLLING IS
THE ONLY THING
THAT HELPS
ME KEEP IT
TOGETHER.

A large comic book panel showing a monstrous creature flying through the air towards the right. The creature has a pale, elongated face with yellow eyes, a wide, toothy grin, and spiky orange hair. It wears a dark jacket and has clawed hands. In the foreground, two young women are shown from the chest up, looking up in shock. The woman on the left has blonde hair and wears a purple jacket. The woman on the right has red hair and wears a brown jacket. The background is a dark blue sky with some clouds and a building visible in the distance.

I KNOW IT
FEELS LIKE YOU
WANT TO BE ALONE,
BUFFY... BUT TRUST
ME ON THIS, YOU
REALLY SHOULDN'T
LET --





YEAH.
THAT'S PRETTY
--AS IN PRETTY HARD
TO SEE WITH A
STAKE IN YOUR
EYE.



YOU OKAY,
TARA?

Y-Y-YES.
I-I-I'M
FINE.

LET'S GET
THAT SCRATCH ALL
CLEANED UP. A LITTLE
ANTIBIOTIC CREAM,
SOME BAND-AIDS, A
COUPLE OF KISSES,
AND NO ONE WILL
NOTICE IN THE
MORNING.





THEN IT HIT ME,
AHN--WE'RE LUCKY
TO HAVE EACH
OTHER. I MEAN, IT'S
GOTTA BE ROUGH
FOR BUFFY TO GO
THROUGH A DEATH
IN THE FAMILY
WITHOUT A GOOD
SNUGGLE--

WHOA...
AH, HEY, WILL...
TARA, HOW'S IT
GOING?

DID WE
INTERRUPT SOME-
THING?

XANDER AND I
WERE JUST TALKING
ABOUT HOW GREAT IT IS
THAT WE'RE IN A STABLE
LOVING RELATIONSHIP.
JUST LIKE YOU TWO.

FOR EXAMPLE,
TARA, I'M SURE WILLOW
WILL ALWAYS BE THERE FOR
YOU, NO MATTER WHAT
HAPPENS...EVEN IF THAT
NASTY SCRATCH GETS
INFECTED AND LEAVES
YOU A DISFIGURED
FREAK.

ANYA
...WE TALKED
ABOUT BEING
NICE...

I AM SO
SICK AND
TIRED
OF YOU,
ANYA!

WHAT
...WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?

I MEAN THIS
FORMER DEMON
ACT. SURE, IT WAS
FUNNY AT FIRST. HA HA.
HUMANS ARE SO
ODD. HAHA. SOCIAL
INTERACTION IS
SO CONFUSING.
HA HA. WELL, IT'S
NOT FUNNY
ANYMORE.

AND I'M
SICK OF PEOPLE
TALKING ABOUT TARA
LIKE SHE WASN'T
EVEN IN THE
ROOM!

WILLOW,
CALM
DOWN--

OH NO!
LOOK
OUT!



NOW LOOK WHAT
YOU'VE DONE! YOU'RE
PAYING FOR THAT,
YOU KNOW.
I'M TELLING GILES.

"I'M TELLING GILES."
YOU'RE SUCH A
CHILD! EVER SINCE
YOU STARTED
WORKING HERE
ALL YOU CAN
EVEN THINK
ABOUT IS
MONEY!

NOW
HOLD ON,
WILLOW.
THAT'S
NOT
FAIR.



YOU KNOW WHAT'S...
NOT F-FAIR? THE FACT
THAT...*NOBODY* ASKED
M-ME IF I WAS
OKAY!



WILLOW, CAN
WE JUST GET OUT
OF HERE?

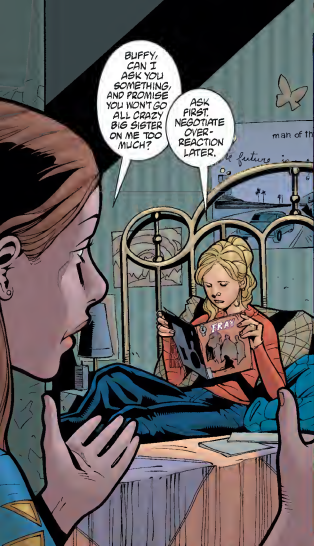
OH MY
GOD, TARA, I'M
SORRY. YEAH,
LET'S GET OUT
OF HERE...



OOPS--
YOU'RE
GOING
TO KILL
ME.

BUT I PROMISED
BUFFY I'D HANG OUT
WITH HER AFTER CLASSES.
QUALITY BEST-FRIEND-TIME
AND ALL THAT. YOU KNOW,
TRYING TO GET BACK TO
NORMAL AFTER THE--

YEAH,
I KNOW.
SEE YOU
LATER,
OKAY?



BUFFY,
CAN I
ASK YOU
SOMETHING,
AND PROMISE
YOU WON'T GO
ALL CRAZY
BIG SISTER
ON ME TOO
MUCH?

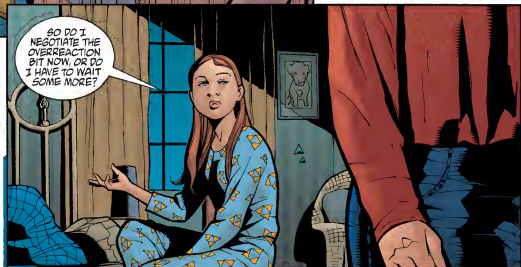
ASK
FIRST.
NEGOTIATE
OVER-
REACTION
LATER.



OKAY, I KNOW SPIKE'S
ALL GA-GA OVER YOU,
AND YOU'RE ALL LIKE, NO
WAY JOSE. BUT DON'T YOU
THINK THAT MAYBE IF
HE WASN'T A VAMPIRE,
THINGS...THINGS
WOULD BE
DIFFERENT?

YES, DAWN.
IF THINGS WERE
DIFFERENT, I GUESS
THEY WOULD BE
DIFFERENT. BUT
SPIKE DOESN'T
CHANGE. HE'S AN
EVIL, SELF-
CENTERED, MANIP-
ULATING--

DING
DONG



SO DO I
NEGOTIATE THE
OVERREACTION
BIT NOW, OR DO
I HAVE TO WAIT
SOME MORE?



I beseech the
hand of fate,
harness my
hate...

...DAMN,
WHAT'S THAT
PHRASE?



DAMN...



SPIKE:
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING HERE? I
REMEMBER TELLING
YOU TO STAY AWAY
FROM US, AND "US"
MOST CERTAINLY
INCLUDES
ME.



YEAH, I GOTCHA
LOUD AND CLEAR ...
IT'S JUST THAT BESIDE
HAVING A FONDNESS FOR
ANNOYING THE HELL OUT
OF YOU, I HAPPEN TO
HAVE A LEGITIMATE
CONCERN ABOUT
BUFFY.

NOW, I
KNOW THAT SHE'D
MORE LIKELY RIP
MY HEAD OFF THAN
LISTEN TO A BIT OF
WELL-MEANT
CONCERN FROM ME,
BUT--

SPIKE.
GO
AWAY.



TOO BAD, 'CAUSE
I THOUGHT YOU'D
BE INTERESTED
IN THIS.

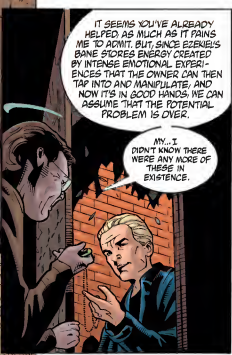
OH MY, IT'S
...IT'S A...



IT'S EZEKIEL'S
BANE. HOW DID
YOU...? WHERE..?

WELL, THAT'S
QUITE A STORY. I WAS
MUCKING ABOUT THE
SEWERS, HELPING OUT
A...FRIEND... WHEN I
STUMBLED ACROSS A
PARATHA DEMON
WEARING THE
OL' BANE.

SO, I
THOUGHT...WELL,
WITH THIS THING
TURNING UP IN
SUNNYDALE, MAYBE
THE SLAYER MIGHT
BE IN DANGER,
AND YOU KNOW,
I COULD...
HELP.



IT SEEMS YOU'VE ALREADY
HELPED, AS MUCH AS IT PAINS
ME TO ADMIT. BUT, SINCE EZEKIEL'S
BANE STORES ENERGY CREATED
BY INTENSE EMOTIONAL EXPERI-
ENCES THAT THE OWNER CAN THEN
TAP INTO AND MANIPULATE, AND
NOW IT'S IN GOOD HANDS, WE CAN
ASSUME THAT THE POTENTIAL
PROBLEM IS OVER.

MY... I
DIDN'T KNOW THERE
WERE ANY MORE OF
THESE IN
EXISTENCE.



STUPID WATCHER!
I DON'T KNOW
WHY I BOTHERED
TO TRY YOU FIRST.
IF IT'S A SLAYER-
SIZED PROBLEM,
THEN I'VE GOT
TO TAKE IT TO
THE SOURCE,
WHETHER SHE
WANTS TO SEE
ME OR NOT.

COME
BACK HERE!
YOU'RE A FOOL,
SPIKE. IF YOU
THINK YOU CAN
USE THAT TO
WIN BUFFY'S
FAVOR!



HOW'S
DAWN WITH
ALL THIS
POST-FUNERAL
ADJUSTING
STUFF?

I CAN'T TELL. SHE SPENDS A
LOT OF TIME IN HER ROOM, BUT
SHE WON'T TALK TO ME ABOUT
IT. WE'VE BEEN HAVING CONVER-
SATIONS LATELY ABOUT EVERY-
THING *BUT*. I THINK SHE'S
LOOKING TO FILL THE
PARENTAL VOID LEFT
BY MOM.



WELL,
THAT MAKES
SENSE I GUESS
HOW ARE YOU
WITH ALL
THIS?

I DON'T KNOW, WILL. I
JUST DON'T KNOW.
CONFUSED, LOST. I TRY
NOT TO THINK ABOUT
IT OR I'LL JUST START
CRYING ALL OVER
AGAIN.



KARASH

WHAT WAS
THAT?

IT CAME FROM
UPSTAIRS.

DAWN!

GOOD THING
VAMPS NEED AN
INVITE, OTHERWISE
I'D FREAK AT
EVERY SOUND.

EVERY
VAMP EXCEPT
SPIKE. OH WAIT,
HE'S LOCKED OUT,
TOO. I GUESS
GOOD THING WE
DID THAT
UN-INVITE
SPELL.

STILL,
BETTER SAFE
THAN SORRY...OR
ACTING SORRY
LIKE WE WERE IN
SOME CHEAP
HORROR
FILM.

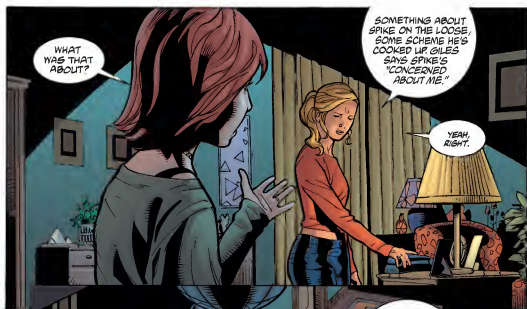
RRRINING

HELLO.

SILES!
OH, HEY.

HUH? I SOUND
STARTLED? NO, IT'S
NOTHING.

SPIKE
IS DOING
WHAT?





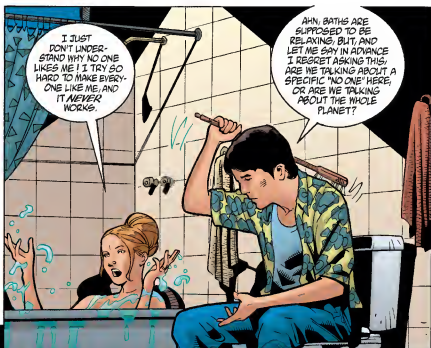
BUFFY,
I THINK SOME-
THING IS IN
THE HOUSE
WITH US.



WOULDN'T
BE THE FIRST
TIME.

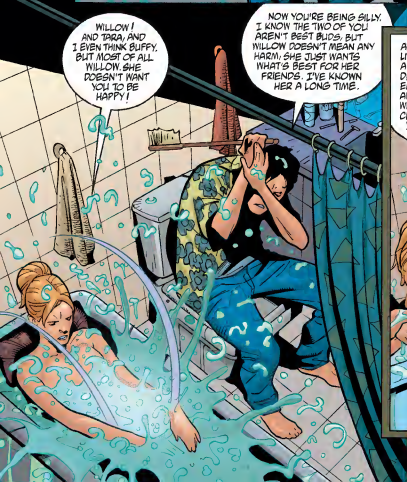


DAWN!



I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY NO ONE LIKES ME! I TRY SO HARD TO MAKE EVERYONE LIKE ME, AND IT NEVER WORKS.

AHH, BATHS ARE SUPPOSED TO BE RELAXING, BUT, AND LET ME SAY IN ADVANCE I REGRET ASKING THIS, ARE WE TALKING ABOUT A SPECIFIC "NO ONE" HERE, OR ARE WE TALKING ABOUT THE WHOLE PLANET?



WILLOW! AND TARA, AND I EVEN THINK BUFFY, BUT MOST OF ALL WILLOW, SHE DOESN'T WANT YOU TO BE HAPPY!

NOW YOU'RE BEING SILLY. I KNOW THE TWO OF YOU AREN'T BEST BUDS, BUT WILLOW DOESN'T MEAN ANY HARM, SHE JUST WANTS WHAT'S BEST FOR HER FRIENDS. I'VE KNOWN HER A LONG TIME.

AND THAT MAKES YOU A LITTLE BLIND, XANDER. I'M A FORMER VENGEANCE DEMON. I KNOW ALL ABOUT EMOTIONS YOU CAN'T CONTROL, AND WILLOW HAS THIS OVERWHELMING NEED TO BE THE CENTER OF ATTENTION. YOUR ATTENTION, AT LEAST.

I'VE SEEN IT BEFORE, AND I'M TELLING YOU NOW, SOMETHING BAD WILL HAPPEN BECAUSE OF IT.









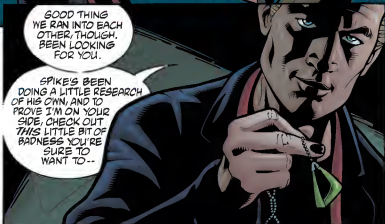




WHAT'S
THIS ALL ABOUT,
SLAYER?

YOU
DISGUST
ME.

RIGHT, SO
NOTHING NEW,
THEN?



GOOD THING
WE RAN INTO EACH
OTHER, THOUGH.
BEEN LOOKING
FOR YOU.

SPIKE'S BEEN
DOING A LITTLE RESEARCH
OF HIS OWN, AND TO
PROVE I'M ON YOUR
SIDE, CHECK OUT
THIS LITTLE BIT OF
BADNESS YOU'RE
SURE TO
WANT TO--





WAY TO
PROVE MY
POINT.

HELLO? I WAS JOKING
REALLY, THIS IS SERIOUS. THAT
THING YOU KICKED OUTTA MY HAND
--IT'S CALLED EZEKIEL'S BONE, AND IT'S
A WICKED CRAZY EMOTION...
CONTROLLER...THING.

POINT IS THAT
MY VAMPIRE SENSE IS
TINGLING. SOMETHING'S
NOT RIGHT IN THE AIR. IF
THIS WERE TO FALL INTO
THE WRONG HANDS--



YOUR VAMPIRE
SENSE? WHAT, DID
YOU GET BIT BY A
RADIOACTIVE BAT?

THERE ARE PEOPLE
I CARE ABOUT, SPIKE,
AND THREE UGLY LITTLE
MONSTERS TRIED TO KILL
A COUPLE OF THEM LAST
NIGHT. IF YOU'VE GOT ANY
INFO ON THAT, GREAT.
IF NOT--

CRASH

--STAY
OUT OF MY
WAY!



FINE THEN.
I'LL GO AND SELL
IT TO THE HIGHEST
BIDDER. I DON'T WANT
ANY PART OF YOU OR
YOUR DO-GOODY
GANG ANYWAY.

BLOODY
HELL.



OKAY, I THINK
I'M FINALLY ON
TOP OF THIS
WHOLE RESEARCH
THING.

I'VE GOT THE
BIG BOOK OF DEMONS,
THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF THINGS
THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT,
THE MONSTER MANUAL, THE
PIEND FOLIO ...

FIRST, WE'LL NARROW
IN ON THESE THREE CRITTERS
BY PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION. SECOND,
ISOLATE THEIR BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS.
DETERMINE THEIR SUPERNATURAL
MOTIVATIONS--PERHAPS, JUST A
GUESS, THEY'RE TRYING TO BRING
ABOUT THE APOCALYPSE...

THEN WE
HIRE THE CONTRACTORS
AND ELECTRICIANS...NO,
WAIT, THAT'S--

YOUR CONSTRUCTION
JOB HAS MADE YOU
QUITE THE PROJECT
MANAGER, XANDER--
IF NOT A BIT CONFUSED.
THOUGH I'M INCLINED
TO EXPLORE A POSSIBLE
MAGICAL INSTIGATING
EVENT.

AH, GUYS?
WE'RE DEALING WITH
SOMETHING CALLED
AVENDSCHROOK.
THEY'RE DEMON
MANIFESTATIONS
OF *JEALOUSY*...BUT
I'M NOT SURE HOW
THEY GET
SUMMONED.

WHAT I *DO*
KNOW IS THEY TRAVEL
IN THREES, ARE PETTY AND
PETULANT--EVEN MORE SO
THAN REGULAR DEMONS
--AND SMELL REALLY,
REALLY BAD.





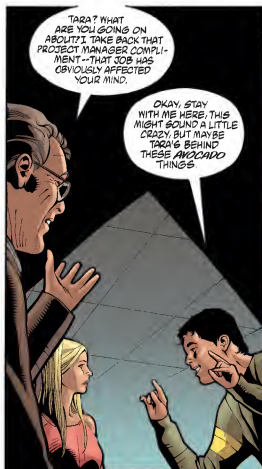
THAT'S
REMARKABLE,
BUFFY. HOW...
HOW DID
YOU--

I DID SOME
RESEARCH EARLIER,
AFTER I FINISHED
PATROLLING LAST NIGHT.
BESIDES, GETTING KINDA
USED TO FLIPPING
THROUGH THESE OLD
BOOKS AND FINDING
THE ANSWER.



JEALOUSY...
WAIT A MINUTE
...WHAT ABOUT
TARA!





TARA? WHAT ARE YOU GOING ON ABOUT? I TAKE BACK THAT PROJECT MANAGER COMPLIMENT -- THAT JOB HAS OBVIOUSLY AFFECTED YOUR MIND.

OKAY, STAY WITH ME HERE; THIS MIGHT SOUND A LITTLE CRAZY, BUT MAYBE TARA'S BEHIND THESE AVOCADO THINGS.



AVENID-SCHROOK. AND YES, THAT DOES SOUND CRAZY. I MEAN, TARA? COME ON, XANDER, SHE'S ONE OF US.

AH HA! BUT IS SHE? SHE AND WILLOW ARE ALWAYS SNEAKING OFF TO... TO DO SPELLS. WHY COULDN'T SHE BE BEHIND THIS? SHE SEEMED ANGRILY MAD THAT WILLOW WANTED TO SPEND TIME WITH BUFFY YESTERDAY.

...AND THESE THINGS ATTACKED BUFFY AND WILLOW EH? EH? THE OLD XAN-MAN COMES THROUGH WITH A PLAN.



WELL, REALLY. XANDER, I'D HARDLY CALL IT A PLAN. MORE OF A FLAWED HYPOTHESIS. ACTUALLY.

YEAH, AND I'VE GOT MY DOUBTS ABOUT ANY MAGIC GOING ON BETWEEN THOSE TWO. I ALWAYS THOUGHT "DOING SPELLS" WAS MORE OF A EUPHEMISM FOR --

OH, CRAP!



SOME-
THING
WRONG,
AHN?

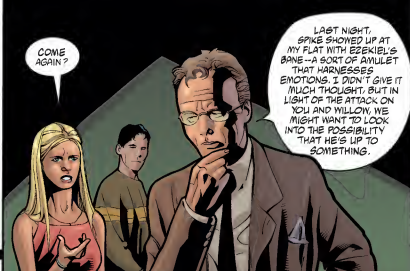
YES! WILLOW
TOOK THE BOWL
OF SHAPUK
BEADS DOWN-
STAIRS YESTER-
DAY TO DO SOME
SORT OF SPELL
AND SHE NEVER
BROUGHT THEM
BACK UP.

SHAPUK
BEADS? YOU'RE
UPSET OVER
SOME SILLY
TRINKETS?

GILES, SHAPUKS
ARE GREAT POINT-OF-
PURCHASE ITEMS FOR THE
IMPULSE SHOPPER. NOW I
HAVE TO GO DOWNSTAIRS TO
GET THEM, AND I HATE
GOING DOWNSTAIRS. IT'S
ALL DIRTY AND SPIKE-
INFESTED.

SPIKE!
OF COURSE!
HOW COULD I
HAVE BEEN SO
BLIND?





COME
AGAIN?

LAST NIGHT,
SPIKE SHOWED UP AT
MY FLAT WITH EEZEKIEL'S
BANE--A SORT OF AMULET
THAT HARNESSSES
EMOTIONS. I DIDN'T GIVE IT
MUCH THOUGHT, BUT IN
LIGHT OF THE ATTACK ON
YOU AND WILLOW, WE
MIGHT WANT TO LOOK
INTO THE POSSIBILITY
THAT HE'S UP TO
SOMETHING.

WAIT
...HE CORNERED ME
ON PATROL AND BABLED
ABOUT THIS BANE THING.
WHAT HAPPENED IF IT FELL
INTO THE WRONG HANDS--
BLAH, BLAH, BLAH. HE SAID
HE WAS GOING TO
SELL IT.

BLAST!
WE'VE GOT TO
FIND OUT WHAT
SPIKE IS
UP TO.

DOES
THIS MEAN
MY TARA
THEORY--



HEY THERE.
GANG, WE MISS
ANYTHING?





NO WONDER
THE PARATHA LOVE
TO HANG OUT IN
THE SEWERS—
COLD, DARK, AND,
DAMN, DO THEY
SMELL RANCID.

I'M
SURPRISED
YOU PICKED
SUCH A
DANGEROUS
LOCATION FOR
OUR SIMPLE
TRANS-
ACTION.



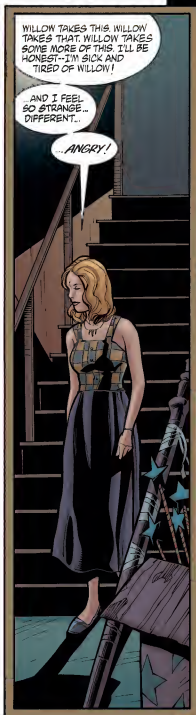
IF A PARATHA
DEMON CATCHES
EITHER ONE
OF US--

ALL THE
BETTER. SENSELESS
VIOLENCE OPENS UP UNUSED
EMOTION RECEPTORS IN OUR
BRAINS, AND WITH EZEKIEL'S
BANE, THE PLEASURE WOULD
BE SO MUCH
GREATER.



RIGHT. SO,
MY DEAR COMA, YOU
GOT THE DOUGH? YOU
DON'T GET THE BANE
TILL I SEE THE
GREEN

I HAVE
YOUR MONEY.
LET ME SEE
THE MERCHAN-
DISE.



WILLOW TAKES THIS. WILLOW TAKES THAT. WILLOW TAKES SOME MORE OF THIS. I'LL BE HONEST--I'M SICK AND TIRED OF WILLOW!

...AND I FEEL SO STRANGE... DIFFERENT...

...ANGRY!



ALL THIS STEALING. NO MORE. AND GILES --HE LETS HER GET AWAY WITH IT



BUT I'LL SHOW THEM.

OH YES. I'LL SHOW THEM.



COME,
SPIKE. DON'T
BE SHY.

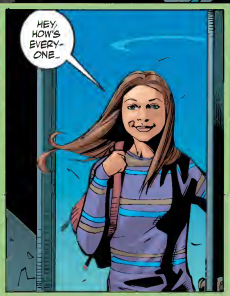


HERE YA GO.
ONE EZEKIEL'S
BANE. NOW, NOT
THAT IT'S ANY
OF MY
BUSINESS...



...BUT WHAT'VE
YOU GOT PLANNED
WITH THAT
TRINKET?

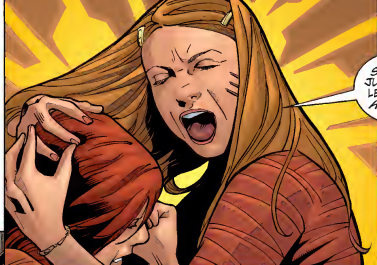
OH, DEAR BOY.
WHY SHOULD I EXPLAIN
THAT WHICH YOU WON'T
UNDERSTAND? TRUST
ME, IT WON'T
BE GOOD.











STOP IT!
JUST...JUST
LEAVE US
ALONE!







SEE! I
WAS RIGHT! IT'S HER!
SHE'S CONTROLLING
THEM!

NO! I...
I JUST WANTED
THEM TO BE
GONE.

XANDER,
WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING?

WE FOUND
OUT WHAT THOSE
THINGS ARE--MANIFES-
TATIONS OF JEALOUSY,
AND WELL, WHO'S BEEN
JEALOUS LATELY?

I THOUGHT WE
WERE AGREED TO
FOLLOW MY MUCH
MORE RATIONAL
SUGGESTION
THAT SPIKE IS
BEHIND ALL
THIS?

YEAH, BUT--
BUT THAT WAS
BEFORE EVERYONE
BUT TARA GOT SLICED
AND DICED.

WHAT
WERE YOU
DOING LAST
NIGHT DURING
THE ATTACK? A
MAGIC SPELL
PERHAPS?





XANDER HARRIS! I CAN NOT BELIEVE YOU ARE ACTING LIKE THIS! YOU KNOW HOW MUCH TARA MEANS TO ME--AND YOU KNOW SHE WOULD NEVER DO ANYTHING TO HARM ANY OF US.

AND SHE WASN'T DOING ANY MAGIC SPELLS LAST NIGHT. SHE...SHE WAS DOING ...NOTHING!

I D-DID DO A SPELL LAST NIGHT.

WELL, THERE
YOU GO! STRAIGHT
FROM THE HORSE'S
MOUTH, AND A ROSE IS A
ROSE, AND GREAT GOOSLY
MOOGLY, WHY AM I TALK-
ING LIKE THIS? ANYA,
HELP ME!

IT W-WASN'T
A JEALOUSY SPELL,
I S-SWEAR!

DON'T
WORRY,
TARA. WE
BELIEVE
YOU.



SOMETHING'S IN THE AIR THAT'S MAKING EVERYONE ACT KINDA STRANGE. WELL, NOT ME, AND...AND NOT GILES.



NO, NOT ME, EITHER...

SO THEN ARE WE READY TO FIND SPIKE AND GET HIM TO PROVIDE HARD ANSWERS TO OUR HARD QUESTIONS ABOUT HIS DEALINGS IN EMOTION AMULETS?

OH, WE'RE READY.



ANOTHER
ROUND,
BUDDY?

I TOLD
YOU TO KEEP
'EM COMING, MATE,
AND I MEANT
IT.

MORE
CIGARETTES-
TOO.

YOU KNOW,
MAYBE IT'S NONE
OF MY BUSINESS,
BUT YOU LOOK
LIKE HELL. LET
ME GUESS--GIRL
TROUBLE?

YOU COULD SAY THAT, ALL
RIGHT. I MEAN, I GO OUT
OF MY WAY TO HELP THIS
GIRL OUT--REAL THOUGHT-
FUL-TYPE STUFF, YOU KNOW.
BUT NO MATTER WHAT I
DO, NO MATTER HOW HARD
I TRY, IT'S NOT
GOOD ENOUGH.

SHE ALWAYS
MAKES ME FEEL LIKE
I SCREWED UP SOMEHOW.
WELL, I'M TIRED OF
GETTING WALKED ON.
I'M NOT PLAYING THAT
GAME ANYMORE.





SPIKE!



ALL RIGHT,
ENOUGH WITH THE
GAMES. YOU TELL ME
WHAT YOU'RE UP TO,
AND YOU TELL ME
RIGHT NOW.

OH, YEAH, RIGHT.
THIS MORNING YOU
DON'T GIVE TWO
STAKES ABOUT OLD
SPIKE. AND NOW I'M
THE CAUSE OF ALL
YOUR WOES? GIMMIE
A BREAK.



HEY!

THAT WAS BEFORE
I WANTED THE BANE-
THING.

EZEKIEL'S
BANE? I SOLD
IT, JUST LIKE I
TOLD YOU I
WOULD.



YOU
SOLD IT? TO
WHO?

LOOK,
SLAYER, THE OFFER
WAS ON THE TABLE. YOU
PASSED, SO I WENT
ELSEWHERE. I GOTTA
GET PAID, JUST LIKE
EVERYONE
ELSE.



OH, RIGHT,
SO YOU CAN
BLOW IT ALL IN A
CRAPPY DIVE BAR.
GIVE ME A NAME,
SPIKE!

HEY!

ALL RIGHT,
NO NEED TO GET
NASTY. I SOLD IT TO
AN AMBITIOUS GAL BY
THE NAME OF COMA. IF
YOU GOTTA KNOW,
SHE HANGS IN THE
SEWERS. GOOD
LUCK FINDING
HER.



I'M A LITTLE LOST
HERE, SLAYER. EARLIER
YOU WANTED NOTHING
TO DO WITH ME OR THE
BANE. NOW YOU'RE ACT-
ING LIKE THE END OF
THE WORLD IS COMING
AGAIN. WHAT
GIVES?

YOU'RE UP
TO SOMETHING,
SPIKE, I KNOW IT.
YOU AND THE
AVENDSCHROOK.
WE'VE HAD TWO
ATTACKS IN
TWO DAYS--



HOLD ON ... DID YOU SAY AVENDSCHROOK? THE JEALOUSY DEMONS? UGLY LITTLE THINGS, TRAVEL IN THREES, SMELL LIKE RANCID SEWAGE?

I'M NOT SURE ABOUT THAT RANCID SEWAGE PART, BUT, YEAH, THEY SMELL PRETTY BAD.

WELL, I'LL TELL YOU, THE BANE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH AVENDSCHROOK. NEXT TO THEM, THE BANE IS NOTHING BUT A CHEAP BAUBLE. I'VE ONLY RUN ACROSS THESE THINGS ONCE BEFORE.

THEY'RE PRETTY RARE, AND THEY HAVE TO BE CALLED FORTH WITH SOME SORT OF CATALYST. IF THEY'VE BEEN ATTACKING, SOUNDS TO ME LIKE YOUR PACK OF SLAYER-ETTES HAS SOME BIGGER PROBLEMS THAN ME TO WORRY ABOUT.

SPIKE, YOU DISGUST ME.



WELL, LOOKS LIKE YOU SCREWED UP AGAIN.

SAVE THE PSYCHOTHERAPY BIT AND JUST SET ME UP HERE.



ACCORDING TO THE INVENTORY LOG, EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE ACCOUNTED FOR, EXCEPT SOME VIALS OF VIDEER DUST, THREE VIALS, I THINK, AND A SMALL STATUETTE FROM THE PHILIPPINES. ANYONE SEEN THEM?

DON'T LOOK AT ME. I DIDN'T TAKE 'EM.

I BET IT WAS WILLOW.



WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?

BECAUSE SHE'S ALWAYS TAKING THINGS. A MAGIC POWDER HERE, A BOOK THERE, ALL SORTS OF TALISMANS, TOKENS, AND TEMPER. ANY OLD THING SHE WANTS, ANY OLD TIME SHE WANTS.

SHE ACTS LIKE SHE'S THE ONE WHO OWNS THIS STORE, SAYING SHE'S JUST BORROWING THESE THINGS, BUT SHE'S NOT BORROWING --SHE'S **STEALING!**



DON'T YOU THINK YOU'RE BEING A LITTLE HARSH?

AND DON'T YOU THINK YOU COULD BE A LITTLE MORE SUPPORTIVE? WHY DO YOU ALWAYS TAKE WILLOW'S SIDE? ANYA WORKS FOR YOU, BUT WILLOW--AND TARA--ARE THE ONES WHO STEAL FROM YOU.



XANDER, WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO YOU? YOU'RE BEING RIDICULOUS.

I'M BEING RIDICULOUS? HEY, PAL, I'M NOT THE ONE WHO LETS A COUPLE OF WITCHES STEAL ME BLIND.



PLEASE, LET'S NOT JUMP TO CONCLUSIONS. IF WILLOW NEEDS A THING OR TWO TO COMPLETE A SPELL, SHE'S WELCOME TO BORROW THE COMPONENTS. I'M NOT ABOUT TO STOP HELPING MY FRIENDS OCCASIONALLY IN THE INTEREST OF COMMERCE.

OCCASIONALLY? GILES, THIS HAPPENS ALL THE TIME. SHE TAKES SOMETHING ALMOST EVERY DAY. HOW CAN WE EVER TURN A PROFIT WITH THAT KIND OF PILFERING?

YEAH, AND HELPING FRIENDS IS ONE THING, BUT YOU, YOU'RE PLAYING FAVORITES. AND I'M SICK OF IT. JUST BECAUSE I CAN'T CAST SPELLS OR DO A GOOD JOB WITH RESEARCH, I'M SUDDENLY A SECOND-CLASS SCOOBY.

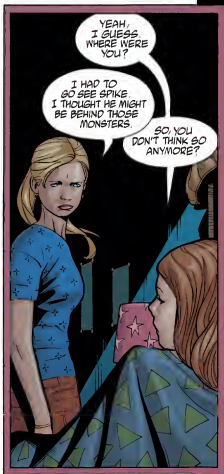


ALL RIGHT, LET'S JUST CALM DOWN HERE. WE'VE ALL BEEN THROUGH A LOT, BUT I THINK IT BEST IF WE ALL TRY TO KEEP CONTROL OF OUR EMOTIONS.



YOU
DOING
OKAY?

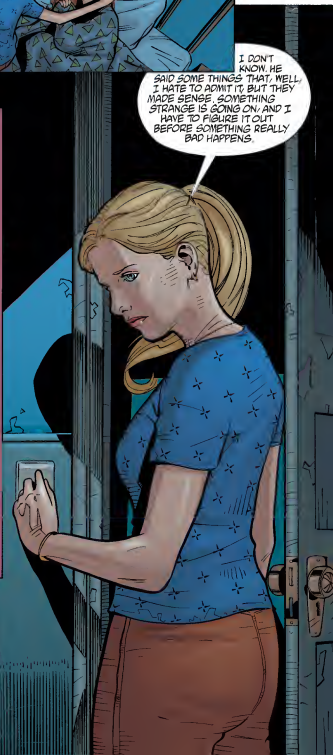
I DON'T
KNOW. HE
SAID SOME THINGS THAT, WELL,
I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT THEY
MADE SENSE. SOMETHING
STRANGE IS GOING ON, AND I
HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT
BEFORE SOMETHING REALLY
BAD HAPPENS.



YEAH,
I GUESS
WHERE WERE
YOU?

I HAD TO
GO SEE SPIKE.
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT
BE BEHIND THOSE
MONSTERS.

SO, YOU
DON'T THINK SO
ANYMORE?





IT'S NOT A BIG DEAL, TARA. XANDER WAS JUST BEING MEAN.

BUT... WHY? I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING TO DESERVE THAT! THEY'RE THE ONES WHO OUGHTTA BE SUFFERING!



IT WAS YOU! THAT SPELL YOU DID--

NO! THAT... THAT WAS A **TEMPERANCE** SPELL THAT I WAS TRYING TO WORK. B-BUT I COULDN'T GET IT... COULDN'T GET IT WITHOUT YOUR HELP. I NEED YOU, WILLOW, AND THEY DIDN'T WANT US TO BE TOGETHER! **THEY** STOPPED US!



THEY'RE JUST JEALOUS. WE'LL SHOW 'EM!







ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME OR DID YOU JUST RUN OUT OF DRINKING MONEY?

BUFFY, I WAS ONLY TRYING TO HELP, AND SOMETHING YOU SAID GOT ME THINKING.



IT WASN'T "SPIKE, YOU DISGUST ME," WAS IT? 'CAUSE YOU SHOULD TRY THINKING ABOUT THAT A LITTLE MORE.

THE AVENDSCHROOK.

KEEP TALKING.



I DID SOME ASKING AROUND ABOUT THOSE LITTLE GUYS. NASTY, LIKE I SAID, BUT WHEREAS I KNEW THEY HAD TO BE CALLED FORTH, IT'S NOT LIKE YOUR TRADITIONAL SUMMONING.

LET ME GUESS--SOME MAGICAL TRIGGER, A LITTLE TEMPER FLARE UP, AND...



BINGO. THE TERRIBLE TRIO
START CUTTIN' LOOSE.
PROBLEM IS, THE EMOTIONS
THEY FEED ON START CHANG-
ING THE PEOPLE INVOLVED.
SURE, I'VE NEVER SEEN IT
HAPPEN IN THE WILD, BUT
THAT'S THE TALK.

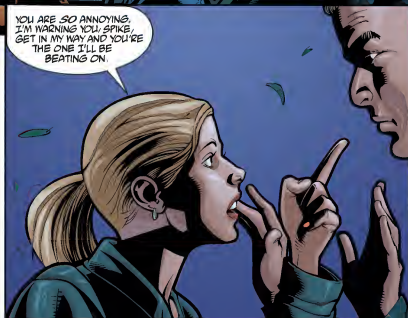


OH NO...
WILLOW,
ANYA...

BEEN
ACTING DIFFERENT,
HAVEN'T THEY? I
TOLD YOU--BIG
PROBLEMS.



I HAVE TO
GET TO THE
MAGIC BOX.



THIS MAY
VERY WELL BE THE
MOST HUMILIATING
EXPERIENCE I'VE EVER
HAD THE MISFORTUNE
OF HAVING.

HELLO! IF
THERE'S ANYONE
HERE NOT TOO
MUCH UNDER THE
EVIL INFLUENCE OF
THESE LITTLE DEMONS,
I COULD USE
A BIT OF
HELP.



WHAT'S
GOING
ON?

IT SEEMS THE
INFLUENCE OF THE
CREATURES IS FADING.
THE REAGENT THAT
FUELS THEM MUST
BE DWINDLING, BUT
WHAT COULD IT
POSSIBLY BE?





VIDEER!

OF COURSE! THE MISSING VIDEER DUST! DO ANY OF YOU REMEMBER SPILLING OR BREAKING VIALS OF THIS GREEN DUST?

IT WAS WILLOW!

IT WAS ANYA!

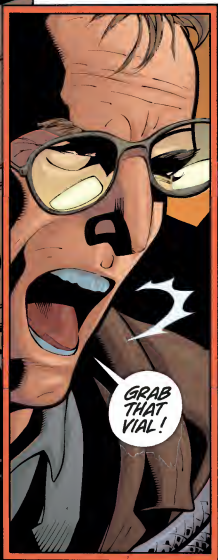


BUFFY! BE CAREFUL!

EVERYONE IS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE AVENDSCHROOK, BUT THEIR POWER SEEMS TO BE WANING. CONCENTRATE ON THE DEMONS! ELIMINATE THEM, AND EVERYONE SHOULD REVERT TO THEIR REGULAR, HARMLESS SELVES.



WAIT A MINUTE...
WHERE DID ANYA GO?





BREAK IT!





HYPOCRITES, THE LOT OF YOU! IT'S SO EASY FOR YOU TO CONDEMN ME JUST FOR BEING A VAMPIRE. I KNOW YOU SEE ME AS A HEARTLESS MONSTER WITH NO CONTROL OVER HIS BASE DESIRES.



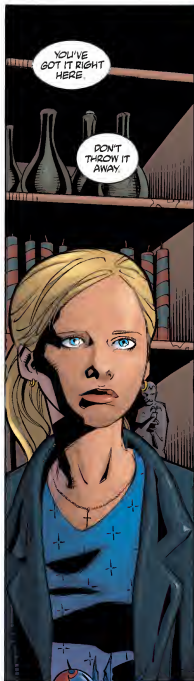
I'M A BEAST WITH NO SOUL... NO COMPASSION, YOU ALWAYS SAY.

BY ALL ACCOUNTS, I'M EVERYTHING THAT YOU'RE NOT.

BUT LOOK AT YOU NOW, MANIPULATED BY YOUR OWN EMOTIONS. YOU'VE LET YOUR PATHETIC DISPUTES AND PERCEIVED JEALOUSIES EAT AT YOU, TURNING YOU INTO THE MONSTERS.

AIN'T THAT A BLOODY JOKE--ME, THE BEAST, ABLE TO OVERCOME MY DESIRES AND PUT A STOP TO YOUR MESS.

LET ME TELL YOU, YOU WANKERS HAVE SOMETHING THAT MOST VAMPIRES, EVEN MOST LIVING, BREATHING PEOPLE, WOULD DIE FOR.



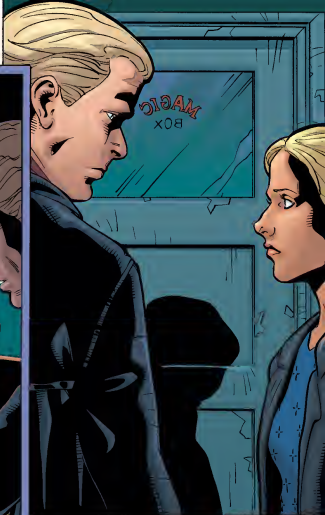
YOU'VE
GOT IT RIGHT
HERE.

DON'T
THROW IT
AWAY.



ALL RIGHT,
LITTLE ONES, YOU'VE
MADE ENOUGH TROUBLE
TIME TO GET BACK TO
WHERE YOU
BELONG.







LOOK WHO'S
HERE. ARE WE
GOING TO HAVE TO
PUT YOU ON A
LEASH,
LITTLE BIT?

WHAT
DO YOU
MEAN?



DON'T GIVE ME THAT.
YOU KNOW WHAT,
YOU'RE ALWAYS
SNEAKING AROUND,
PUTTING YOURSELF,
AND EVERYONE ELSE,
IN DANGER. JUST
LOOK AT THAT MESS
WITH YUKI. YOU
COULD HAVE BEEN
KILLED.

AND DON'T YOU GIVE
ME THAT! YOU'RE THE
ONE WHO'S ALWAYS
SNEAKING AROUND,
DOUBLE-DEALING US
BEHIND OUR BACKS. YOU
DID IT WITH YUKI--WE
DIDN'T KNOW WHAT
TEAM YOU WERE PLAY-
ING FOR. WE NEVER
KNOW WHEN TO TRUST
YOU AND WHEN NOT
TO TRUST YOU!

LITTLE
SISTER'S
GOT A
POINT.



YEAH,
WELL.

GUESS
SHE DOES.



SPIKE,
PROMISE ME
SOMETHING...
PROMISE ME YOU
WON'T LIE TO
ME--TO US--
ANYMORE.

TELL
YOU
WHAT.

I'LL PROMISE NOT
TO LIE TO YOU...BUT
I NEED YOU TO
PROMISE
ME SOME-
THING,
TOO.

WHAT'S
THAT?

STOP SNEAKING
AROUND AND DO WHAT
YOU'RE TOLD. YOUR SISTER
MAY NOT ALWAYS BE
HERE TO LOOK
AFTER YOU.



WELL, WELL.
PRACTICAL ADVICE
FROM SPIKE.
WHAT'S NEXT?

AFTER THAT?
I WOULDN'T BE
SURPRISED IF
IT'S THE END
OF THE
WORLD.



the
END

CHAOS BLEEDS









LET ME
GUESS, YOU GOT
CAUGHT CHEATING AT
KITTEN POKER
AGAIN?



YER A
BLOODY COMEDIAN,
SLAYER. I'D BE LAUGHIN'
IF I WASN'T SO CONCERNED
ABOUT SPITTIN' UP AN
ORGAN OR TWO.

HAD ME A BIT
OF A SCUFFLE DOWN
AT THE GOLDEN SPUR. THIS
FREAKY LITTLE FAMILY CAME
IN, LOOKIN' LIKE SOMETHING
OUT OF A SPAGHETTI
WESTERN, ONLY WITH
SHARPER TEETH.



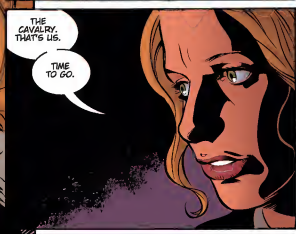
WAIT. I'M
SORRY, STOP THE
AMUSING TALE OF
YOUR THRASHING FOR
A MOMENT. DID YOU
SAY YOU WERE AT
THE GOLDEN
SPUR?

'YOUZ I'M JUST
GROOVING ON THE
IMAGE OF YOU AT A
COUNTRY WESTERN BAR.
THAT'S LIKE WILLOW
AND TARA IN THE
GOSPEL CHOIR.



NO, I CAN
SEE IT. SPIKE,
WITH THE BOOTS,
AND THE . . . THE LINE
DANCING AND . . .
WAS THERE LINE
DANCING?

ONLY LINE
DANCING WAS
ON MY FACE. THE UGLY
SODS TOOK ME APART.
BARELY GOT OUT OF
THERE WITH MY SKIN, BUT
I FIGURED I HAD TO
COME FETCH THE
CAVALRY.



THE
CAVALRY, THAT'S US.

TIME
TO GO.



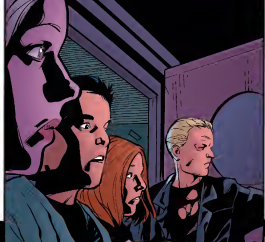
OUT OF ONE
HELLHOLE AND
INTO ANOTHER.





SO, VAMPIRE
COWBOYS? I'M
THINKING ONE OF
'EM'S GOTTA BE
LYLE GORCH.

MAYBE IT'S LYLE,
BUT THE BEZOAR
KILLED HIS BROTHER.
CORDELIA STAKED HIS
SKANKY WIFE. I WAS SORT
OF HOPING THERE WEREN'T
ANY MORE LIKE THEM
BACK AT THE
RANCH.



TEENY!
WHAT THE HELL
YOU DOIN' OVER
THERE?



*... WOULDN'T
MIND SO MUCH SHE
LEFT ME, IF SHE'D'A
LEFT THE DOG
BEHIND...



JUST CAN'T MAKE
HEADS NOR TAILS OUTTA
THIS CONTRAPTION. I CAN
HEAR THE MUSIC, BUT I
DON'T SEE NOBODY PLAYIN'
IT. MAYBE THEY GOT THEM,
WHATCHACALLEN?
LEPRECHAUNS OR
SOMETHIN' IN THERE.





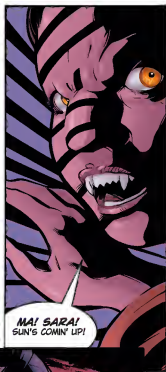


SO YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME, HUH? THEN LET'S CALL THIS A REFRESHER COURSE.

I'M BUFFY SLIMMERS. THE SLAYER. RING ANY BELLS?



SLAYER OR NO, I'LL RING YOUR BELL, GIRLY.



MA! SARA! SUN'S COMIN' UP!



SORRY, DARLIN'. TIME'S UP.

UHHKKK!
BLOODY HELL!



THIS AIN'T OVER, SLAYER. YOU AND YER FRIENDS ARE STILL HERE AT SUNDOWN. WE'LL BE COMIN' FOR YA. THE GORCH FAMILY AIN'T KNOWN FOR FORGIVIN'.

I WANTED TO EAT THE WITCH. CAN I EAT THE WITCH?



BUFFY, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

OTHER THAN BEING MASSIVELY CONFUSED, I'M FINE.

RIGHT AS RAIN, THANKS. NOT THAT ANYONE'S ASKING. JUST STANDIN' HERE TRYIN' TO KEEP MY SODDIN' GUTS FROM FALLIN' OUT. JUST NOT MY DAY.



I UNDERSTAND YOUR
CONFUSION, BUFFY.
REMARKABLY, IT HAS
NOTHING TO DO WITH
THE BLOW YOU TOOK
TO THE HEAD.



I THINK SHE
WAS LOOKING
FOR SOMETHING A
BIT MORE THAN
YOUR SYMPATHY,
GILES.

MAYBE IT'S
TIME SOMEBODY
FILLS ME IN ON
THE GORCHES.



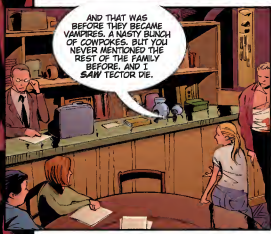
I NEVER MENTIONED
JILLY, SARA, OR THEIR
MOTHER IN THE PAST,
BECAUSE, ACCORDING TO
THE COUNCIL'S RECORDS,
THEY ARE ALSO
SUPPOSED TO BE
DEAD.

THERE SEEMS
TO ME ONLY ONE
EXPLANATION FOR ALL
OF THIS. IT'S POSSIBLE THESE
ARE NOT THE GORCHES WE
KNOW, BUT A GORCH FAMILY
DRAWN EITHER FROM THE
PAST, OR EVEN FROM AN
ALTERNATE DIMENSION.

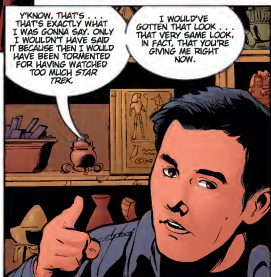


ACCOUNTS OF THE
FAMILY ARE SKETCHY.
THEY WERE EITHER
AMBITIOUS, OR JUST
VERY, VERY
ANGRY.

THEY HAIL FROM
ABILENE, TEXAS.
IN 1886, THEY
SLAUGHTERED AN
ENTIRE VILLAGE
IN MEXICO.



AND THAT WAS
BEFORE THEY BECAME
VAMPIRES, A NASTY BUNCH
OF CONFOCKES. BUT YOU
NEVER MENTIONED THE
REST OF THE FAMILY
BEFORE, AND I
SAW TECTOR DIE.



Y'KNOW, THAT'S . . .
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT
I WAS GONNA SAY. ONLY
I WOULDN'T HAVE SAID
IT BECAUSE THEN I WOULD
HAVE BEEN TORMENTED
FOR HAVING WATCHED
TOO MUCH STAR
TREK.

I WOULD'VE
GOTTEN THAT LOOK . . .
THAT VERY SAME LOOK,
IN FACT, THAT YOU'RE
GIVING ME RIGHT
NOW.



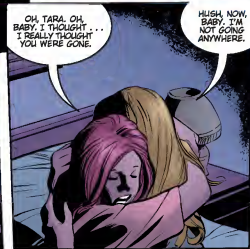
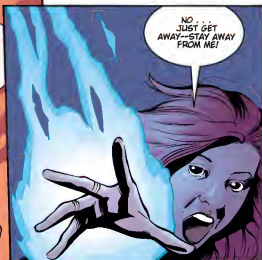


HEY, TARA, SWEETIE.
SORRY I WASN'T
HERE TO KEEP THE
BED WARM FOR
YOU.



WHY NOT
START NOW?

TARA?
NO...
OH, GOD--
PLEASE, NO!







ARE YOU SURE HE DIDN'T GO HOME?

GILES, COME ON!



HMM? DAMN IT. FELL ASLEEP ON THE JOB AGAIN.



... ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN IT WAS TARA?

I THINK I'D KNOW. I MEAN, IT WAS HER, BUT A VAMPIRE HER. BUT OBVIOUSLY, SHE'S NOT. Y'KNOW, THAT WAY.



FIRST THE GORGES. NOW A VAMPIRIC VERSION OF TARA. A SHAME WE CAN'T INTRODUCE HER TO YOUR VAMPIRE DOPPELGÄNGER.

IT ALL FITS, ACTUALLY. MY RESEARCH SUGGESTS WE'RE EXPERIENCING A SORT OF DIMENSIONAL BLEED, WHERE BITS OF OTHER REALITIES ARE SLIPPING INTO THIS ONE.



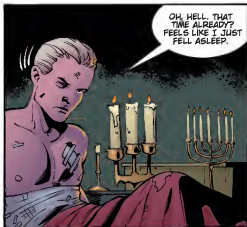
IT'S POSSIBLE THERE'S SOME MALEVOLENT FORCE BEHIND IT, BUT IT MIGHT SIMPLY BE A RESULT OF OUR PROXIMITY TO THE HELLMOUTH. EITHER WAY, WE'VE GOT TO SEAL THIS BREACH.

ISN'T THAT WHAT YOU'VE GOT HERE? I MEAN, IT LOOKS LIKE THIS SPELL WOULD STOP THE DIMENSIONAL BLEED AND SEND BACK WHATEVER'S COME THROUGH.



WOULD YOU LOOK AT THAT? I MUST'VE FALLEN ASLEEP IN PRECISELY THE RIGHT PLACE.

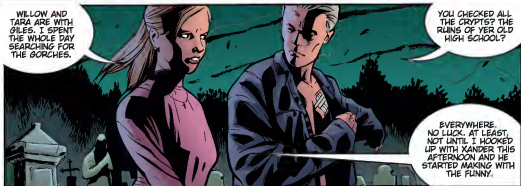
YAHITZEE! NOW WE JUST HAVE TO GATHER THE INGREDIENTS, AND MAKE WITH THE MOJO.



OH, HELL. THAT
TIME ALREADY?
FEELS LIKE I JUST
FELL ASLEEP.



DRAW YOUR
CARCASS OUT OF
BED, LAZYBONES.
WE'VE GOT WORK
TO DO.



WILLOW AND
TARA ARE WITH
GILES. I SPENT
THE WHOLE DAY
SEARCHING FOR
THE GORGES.

YOU CHECKED ALL
THE CRYPTS? THE
RUINS OF YER OLD
HIGH SCHOOL?

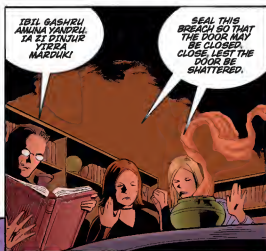
EVERYWHERE.
NO LUCK. AT LEAST,
NOT UNTIL I HOOKED
UP WITH XANDER THIS
AFTERNOON AND HE
STARTED MAKING WITH
THE FUNNY.



HE SAID IF HE WAS
A VAMPIRE LOOKING
TO SHACK UP JUST FOR
THE DAY, HE'D FIND SOME
NO-TELL MOTEL WHERE
THEY NEVER ASK
QUESTIONS...

THEY'RE IN THERE, ALL
RIGHT. AS SOON AS IT
STARTED TO GET DARK I
SAW THAT CREEPY LITTLE
GIRL AT THE WINDOW WITH
THAT SEVERED HAND.
HASN'T SHE EVER
HEARD OF BARBIE?





IBIL GASHRU
AMUNA YANDRU,
IA ZI DINJUR
YIRRA
NARDUKI!

SEAL THIS
BREACH SO THAT
THE DOOR MAY
BE CLOSED.
CLOSE, LEST THE
DOOR BE
SHATTERED.



YOU'RE TURNIN'
OUT TO BE A REAL
PAIN IN THE ASS,
SLAYER.

WHAT THE
HELL, KINDA
NAME IS BUFFY
ANYWAY?



IT'S THE NAME
OF THE GIRL
WHO'S GONNA
SEND YOU BACK TO
COWBOY HELL..



GASHRU
ENIL ZI
ARDATA!

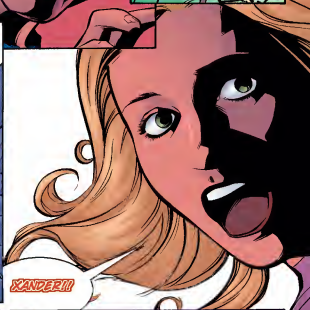
SEAL THIS
BREACH, CLOSE
THE DOOR, LEST
THE DOOR BE
SHATTERED.
LEST ITS BARS
BE BROKEN.



NOW WE'RE
TALKIN'.







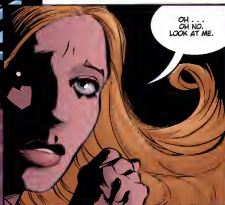


WHAT IS--

STAY FOCUSED!
COMPLETE THE
SPELL!



WILLOW,
PLEASE ...
DON'T DO
THIS ...



OH ...
OH NO.
LOOK AT ME.

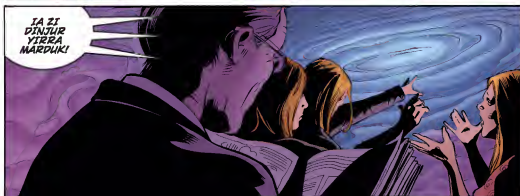


STAY
FOCUSED!

NO, BABY.
IT'S NOT
YOU.



WILLOW, PLEASE,
YOU CAN'T. IN MY
WORLD ... YOU'RE
DEAD. I JUST ...
I HAD TO SEE
YOU AGAIN.



IA ZI
DINJUR
YIRRA
MARDUKI



ISN'T HE A
LITTLE YOUNG
FOR YOU?



NOW THERE'S
SOMETHING YOU
DON'T SEE
EVERY DAY.

MAAAAAA!

YOU JUST
HANG ON,
BABY GIRL.



WE'RE
NOT DONE,
TRAITOR.

OH,
BUGGER
OFF.



WILLOW... I JUST
WANTED TO HOLD YOU
AGAIN... I JUST
WANTED YOU TO MAKE
ME WARM...



WELL THAT'S
THAT, THEN.
HERE'S HOPING
IT'S REALLY
OVER.



THE END ... FOR NOW!!!!!!

The Death of Buffy







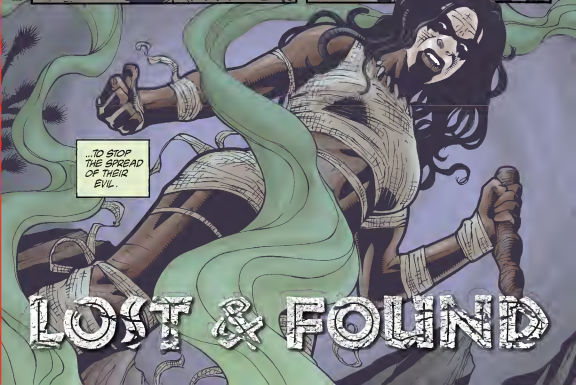
INTO EVERY
GENERATION, A
SLAYER IS BORN



ONE GIRL,
IN ALL
THE WORLD,
A CHOSEN ONE



ONE BORN
WITH THE
STRENGTH
AND SKILL TO
HUNT THE
VAMPIRES...



...TO STOP
THE SPREAD
OF THEIR
EVIL.

LOST & FOUND

THROUGHOUT
THE AGES,
SHE HAS
ALWAYS BEEN THERE.



FORSAKING
FRIENDS
AND FAMILY.



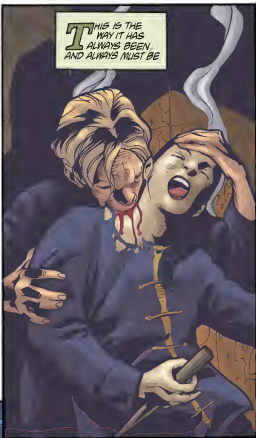
PROTECT-
ING THE
INNOCENT.



FACING THE
DARKNESS,
WHEREVER
SHE MIGHT FIND IT.



THIS IS THE
WAY IT HAS
ALWAYS BEEN
AND ALWAYS MUST BE



IN THE
FACE
OF SUCH
EVIL...



BUFFY!

DAWNIE, I
HAVE TO
LISTEN
TO ME--

THERE'S
NOT A LOT
OF TIME.





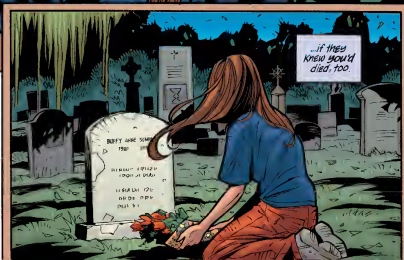
THE LIFE OF ONE GIRL IS SUCH A SMALL PRICE TO PAY.

Since you died, every
breath I take has felt
like I'm swallowing
sandbags.

I know
I've probably come
here too much.

After Mom...well, everyone
at school was all, "Hey,
there goes Dawn, the
Gravestone Girl."

The pity-patrol
would have a
field day...



No sister,
Buffy Summers,
can die—I guess...

...but **Buffy**
the Vampire
Slayer can't.

BECAUSE YOU WERE
all that kept EVERY
demon, magical thingie,
and telemarketer from
devouring **Summerville**.

So ever since you died saving me
(and the world, too, should mention that)
there's all tried putting up a front.



Willow and Tara moved
into the house... uh... I
let them have Mom's bedroom.

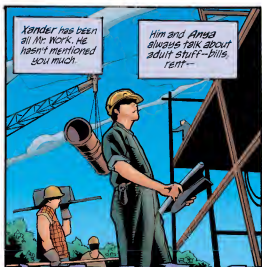
I feel so guilty
about it...

...it makes
me feel like
I'm betray-
ing you.

Everyone was very "don't be
silly," but I don't know... I've
tried to avoid—

—what they've all
tried so hard to do—

...to ignore
the truth
about your
death.



Xander has been all Mr. Work. He hasn't mentioned you much.

Him and Anya always talk about adult stuff--bills, rent--



--being a part of the Scooby-Gang and going on patrol for night-uglies--



"Well, they're only going through the motions.

Scared or just maybe... trying to forget you?

Don't know. I do know Giles is a standing eight count.

Doing the "cleaning the glasses" bit about a jillion times more than usual.

What good's a Watcher with no Slayer to watch?



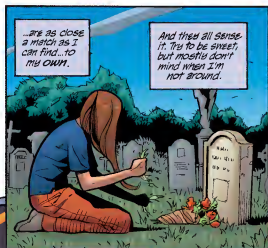
But the worst one of all has been Spike.

Avoiding us, blaming himself for what happened to you.



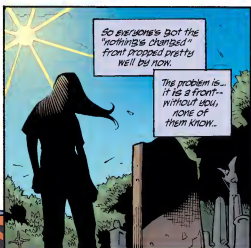
I've taken on "crutch-duty," 'cause I felt sorry for him.

But mostly 'cause his guilt and misery...



...are as close
a match as I
can find...to
my own.

And then all sense
it. Try to be sweet,
but mostly don't
mind when I'm
not around.



So everyone's got the
"nothing's changed"
front dropped pretty
well by now.

The problem is--
it is a front--
without you,
none of
them know..



...who they're
supposed to be.

So they keep
trying to
be you--

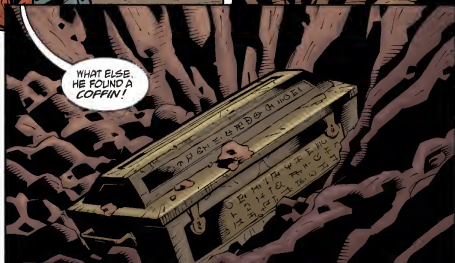
--with sandbags for
lungs, breathing
heavy--scared--



--because we
haven't said
what we've
all been
thinking--



--if you died
being you--





--WOULD ANYONE WANT TO BURY BILLY BARTY IN SUNNYDALE?

IT'S *NOT* A COFFIN, ANYA. *Uhm*...NO RATTLING BONES INSIDE.

WHY NOT WAIT FOR GILES? WHEN HE IS HERE HE VERY MUCH ENJOYS LOCATING DUSTY BOOKS.

GIVE HIM SOME TIME. GIVE US *ALL* SOME TIME.

MORTALS DON'T HAVE THE SAME "YESTERDAY'S LUNCH" ATTITUDE ABOUT DYING THAT THOUSAND-YEAR-OLD EX-DEMONS DO.

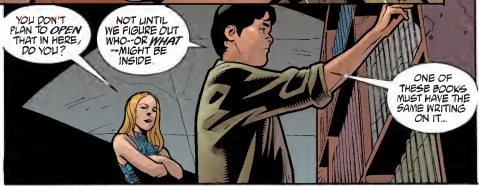
I WAS VERY UPSET WHEN JOYCE DIED. I EVEN CRIED VERY SALTY TEARS. REMEMBER?

IT'S --WELL-- I'LL TELL YOU AS SOON AS I FIGURE IT OUT.

THEN AGAIN, HE RARELY SEEMS TO BE HERE ANYMORE



AND EVERY LUNCH --EVEN DINNERS-- HAVE BEEN VERY BLAND SINCE BUFFY DIED AND--



YOU DON'T PLAN TO OPEN THAT IN HERE, DO YOU?

NOT UNTIL WE FIGURE OUT WHO--OR *WHAT*--MIGHT BE INSIDE.

ONE OF THESE BOOKS MUST HAVE THE SAME WRITING ON IT...



YOU KNOW, THE LETTERS *DO* LOOK FAMILIAR AND--

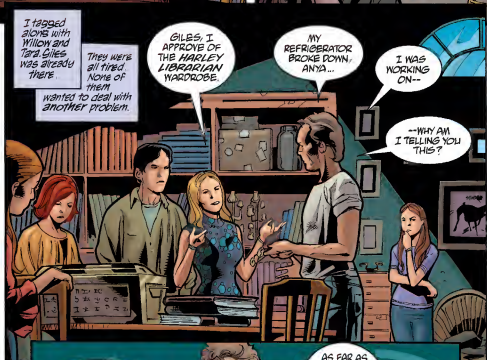
--DO YOU THINK THEY'RE REAL GOLD?

CLOSE THE CASH-REGISTER IN YOUR BRAIN, SWEETIE.



I CAN'T FIND ANYTHING.

PERHAPS WE SHOULD CALL SOMEONE *SMARTER* THAN YOU?



I tagged along with Willow and Tara. Giles was already there.

They were all tired. None of them wanted to deal with another problem.

GILES, I APPROVE OF THE HARLEY LIBRARIAN WARDROBE.

MY REFRIGERATOR BROKE DOWN, ANYA...

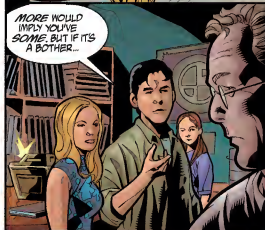
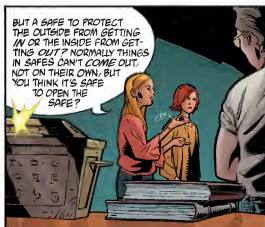
I WAS WORKING ON--

--WHY AM I TELLING YOU THIS?



VERY WELL THEN, THE SCRIPTURE IS SUMERIAN.

AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, THE CASKET IS ACTUALLY A SAFE.





Without you, there were
too many Indians
and not
enough
chiefs.

No one wanted
to take charge.

It's like they were just
running into the darkness--

--with
their
eyes
closed...?

I should have
said something--

--but they
wouldn't have
listened to me.

THEY BLAME
YOU.

They
blamed me
...for your
death...



So I didn't
say anything.



RUPERT.

SPIKE,
I'M RATHER
BUSY.

GOT
A LIGHT,
MATE?



YOU CAME
HERE FOR
A MATCH?

AND
A SHEAR
OF CYTORRAK,
IF YOU GOT
ONE.



WHY EVER
WOULD YOU
NEED ONE
OF THOSE?

KNOCKED AN
ACID DEMON
OUT BY THE
MUNICIPAL
BUILDING.

NEED THE
SHEARS TO CLIP
OFF HIS... YOU
KNOW... *SPRAYING
MECHANISM.*

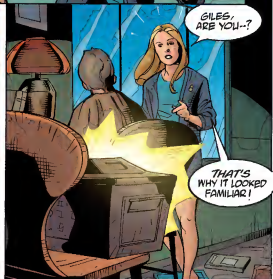
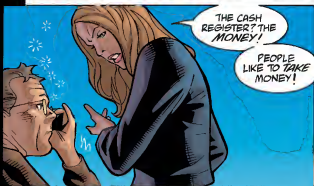
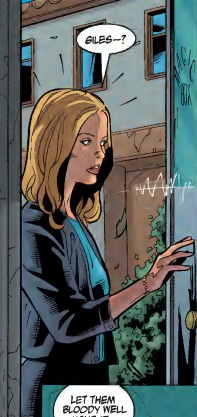


AH.

I SEE.

YES, WELL,
THEN, LET
ME FETCH A
PAIR...









By the time we got there, Giles and Anya had... chatted...

THE SAFE CONTAINED A DEMON NAMED VEEYA.

SHE IS THE HALF-BREED DAUGHTER OF A HUMAN MALE AND A FERTILITY GODDESS, NIMBA--

--WHO, AGES AGO, WAS WORSHIPED BY THE SIMO SOCIETY OF GUINEA.

IS THAT LIKE THE SOCIETY OF SUPER-VILLAINS? COOL, WE'RE FIGHTING LEX LUTHOR!



SHE FEEDS OFF EMOTIONS--VERY SPECIFIC ONES. THE DESPAIR BORNE OF TRAGIC LOSS.

I-- WELL, I KNOW HER.

WE KIND OF... WELL, *HUNG OUT TOGETHER* FOR A FEW DECADES.

ME, THE *LOVELORN VENGEANCE* DEMON--HER, ALL EATING SADNESS--WE KIND OF MADE A GOOD TEAM.

LIKE PEANUT BUTTER AND CHOCOLATE. OR BEER AND PRETZELS. OR BUNNIES AND CUISINARTS.

LIAM... WELL, YOU KNOW.



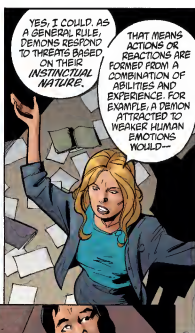


BUT YOU HAVE NO IDEA HOW SHE WOUND UP IN THE CASKET?

WE DRIFTED APART, YOU KNOW, THE WAY FRIENDS DO SOMETIMES?



WELL, MIGHT YOU CONJECTURE AS TO WHERE SHE HAS GONE NOW?



YES, I COULD. AS A GENERAL RULE, DEMONS RESPOND TO THREATS BASED ON THEIR INSTINCTUAL NATURE.

THAT MEANS ACTIONS OR REACTIONS ARE FORMED FROM A COMBINATION OF ABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE. FOR EXAMPLE, A DEMON ATTRACTED TO WEAKER HUMAN EMOTIONS WOULD—



TAKE A GUESS WHERE SHE WENT!



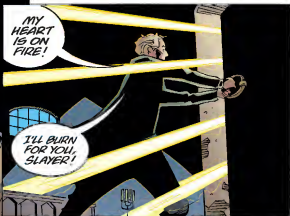
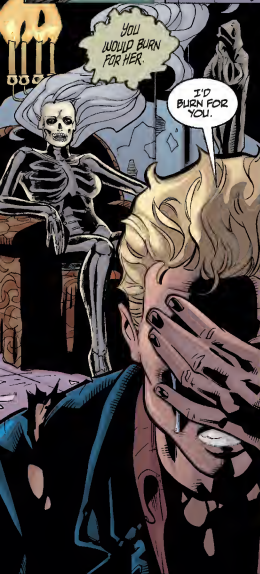
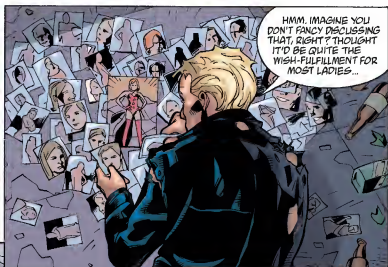
OH, THAT'S WHAT "CONJECTURE" MEANS? HEH. I THOUGHT IT WAS LIKE A LECTURE.

THAT'S EASY. SHE'D LOOK FOR THE BIGGEST GLOWING BLOB OF DEPRESSION SHE COULD FIND.



SO SHE LEFT HERE?

INDEED. WHO COULD BE MORE DEPRESSED THAN THE LOT OF US?





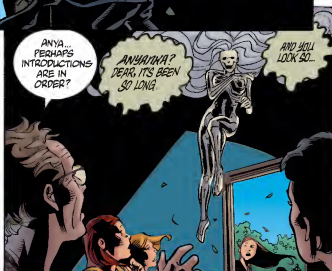
SPIKE!

AND YOU WITHOUT YOUR SUNBLOCK!



EVEN FOR YOU THAT WAS PATHETIC!

AND YOU TOTALLY SMELL.



ANYA... PERHAPS INTRODUCTIONS ARE IN ORDER?

ANYA? DEAR, IT'S BEEN SO LONG.

AND YOU LOOK SO...



-FRAGILE.

SO... HUMAN.

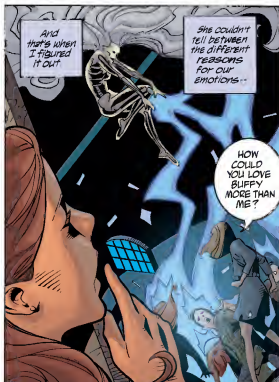


YUP, THAT'S ME. VERY HUMAN NOW. EASY TO SNAP, CRACKLE, AND POP.

WOULD RATHER YOU NOT FIND OUT FOR YOURSELF.

LIAM... ABOUT THE CASKET THING?





And that's when I figured it out.

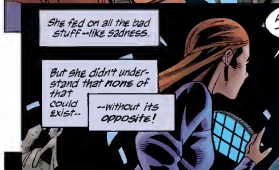
She couldn't tell between the different reasons for our emotions...

HOW COULD YOU LOVE BUFFY MORE THAN ME?



...and how sometimes...

...we have trouble separating them, too.

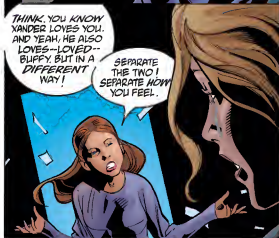


She fed on all the bad stuff--like sadness.

But she didn't understand that none of that could exist...

--without its opposite!

ANYA--STOP
--THINK!



THINK, YOU KNOW XANDER LOVES YOU. AND YEAH, HE ALSO LOVES--LOVED--BUFFY, BUT IN A DIFFERENT WAY!

SEPARATE THE TWO! SEPARATE HOW YOU FEEL.





EVERYONE--
SEPARATE HOW
YOU FEEL
ABOUT BUFFY'S
DEATH!



THINK
ABOUT WHAT
SHE MEANT
TO US--

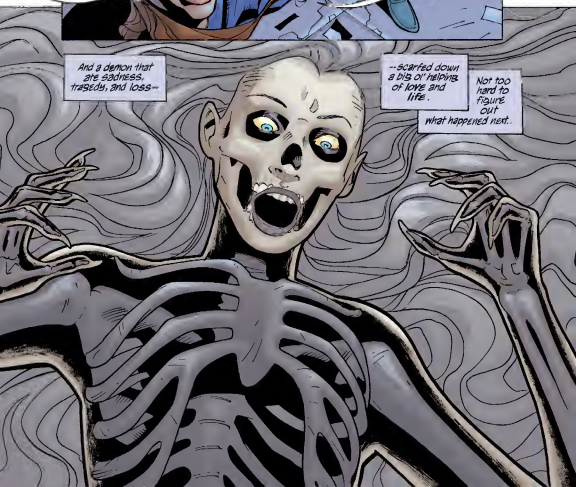


YES...OF
COURSE...SHE'S
FEEDING OFF
OUR SADNESS
ABOUT BUFFY'S
DEATH--



RIGHT,
BUT THERE'S
NO WAY SHE
CAN HANDLE OUR
HAPPINESS--

--ABOUT
HER
LIFE!



And a demon that
ate sadness,
tragedy, and loss--

--scarfed down
a big ol' helping
of love and
life.

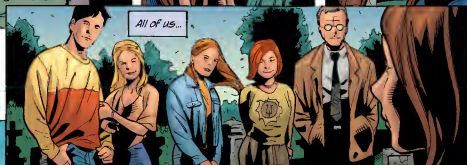
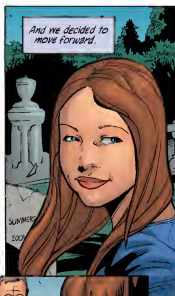
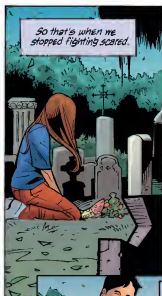
Not too
hard to
figure
out
what happened next.



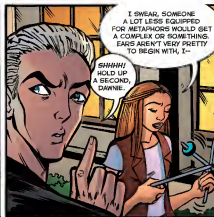
It was actually a pretty cool moment. Kind of warm and all SEVENTH HEAVEN. Except for the rotting-flesh smell.

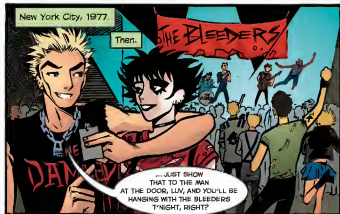
We had fought and won, not because of your death...

...but because of your life.











Willow & Tara Wilderness

TARA, BABY, CAN YOU HAND ME ANOTHER ONE OF THOSE TUMMY-YUMMY SEAWEEED ROLLS?

THAT'S DISGUSTING, YOU GUYS. **SEAWEEED** ROLLS? YUCK!

I GOT YOU SOME POTATO CHIPS, SO NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT UCKY SEAWEEEDNESS.

ARE YOU HAVING A GOOD TIME, DAWNIE? I FEEL BAD, US DRAGGING YOU AROUND TO ALL THOSE WITCHY PLACES...

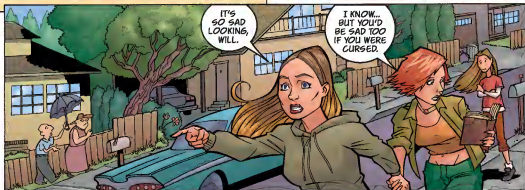
YOU GUYS, I'M HAVING FUN.

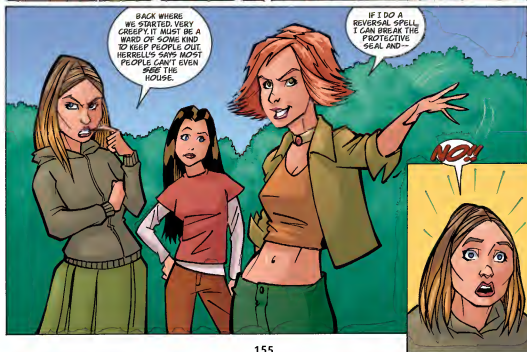
I COULD HAVE OPTED FOR DISNEYLAND WITH XANDER AND ANYA, BUT TRUST ME, CHECKING OUT MAGICAL POWER SPOTS AND HAUNTED BEACHES WITH YOU GUYS IS, LIKE, WAY MORE EXCITING.

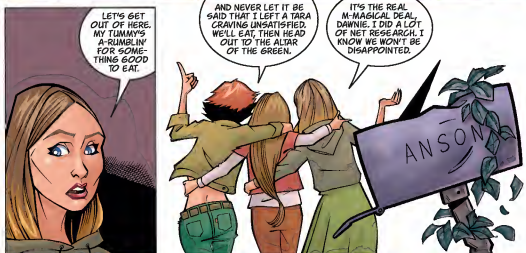
YOU MEAN TWO GRAFFITI-COVERED INDIAN ROCK CIRCLES AND A NON-HAUNTED, HAUNTED BEACH? THAT WAS EXCITING?

COME ON, YOU TWO! GHOSTIES ASIDE, THIS IS GONNA BE A GIRL-POWER EXTRAVAGANZA. JUST LEAVING THE SUNNYDALE ZIP CODE WITH MY TWO FAVORITE WOMEN MAKES FOR HAPPY WILLOWNESS.

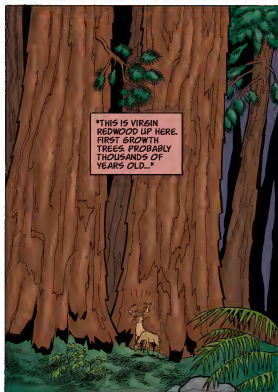
FINDING SOME POWER SPOTS WITH ACTUAL MAGIC IS ONLY ICING ON THE CAKE THAT IS VACATION.















THAT WAS
AWFUL. THE
POOR
WOMAN--

I KNOW--
IT'S NOT FUNNY.
BUT...THE
SQUIRRELS...



YOU'RE *BOTH* RIGHT.
CUTE YET HOMICIDAL
FOREST CREATURES
AREN'T THE KIND
OF THING YOU
EXPECT FROM A
BENEVOLENT EARTH
GODDESS.



THERE'S
SOMETHING NOT
QUITE RIGHT ABOUT
THIS PLACE. IF GILES
WERE HERE, HE'D BE
HAVING A GLASSES-
CLEANING MARATHON.



LET'S CHECK OUT
THE ALTAR OF THE
GREEN. IF THERE'S
ANY MALEVOLENT
SUPERNATURAL
DOINGS AROUND
HERE, WE'LL SENSE
IT THERE.



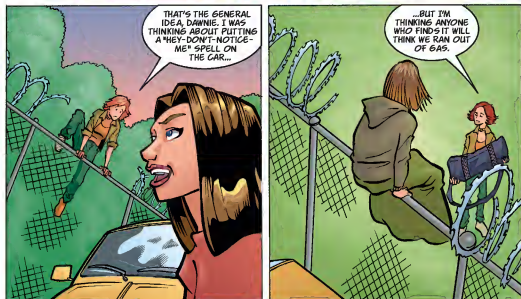
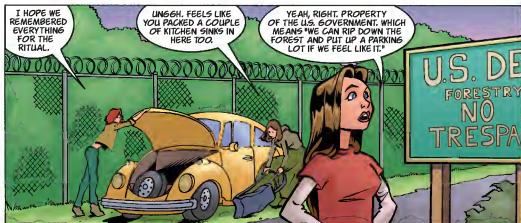
IT'S PROBABLY
JUST A BUNCH OF
WHOOEY TO KEEP
PEOPLE OUT OF
THE FOREST,
ANYWAY.

TRYING
TO SAVE THE
FOREST BY
TELLING TALL
TALES? I
DON'T KNOW,
TARA.



OR, HEY, GUYS, MAYBE
THE LOGGER WAS KILLED BY
LITTLE FURRY DEMONS
AND HIS WIFE JUST ASSUMED
RABID SQUIRRELS. LITTLE,
SQUIRREL-SHAPED
DEMONS.

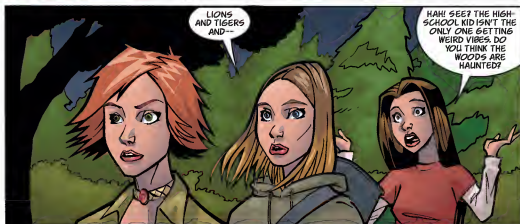
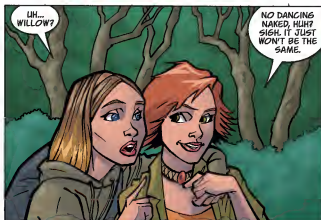
AND
NOW I'M
CREEPING
MYSELF
OUT!



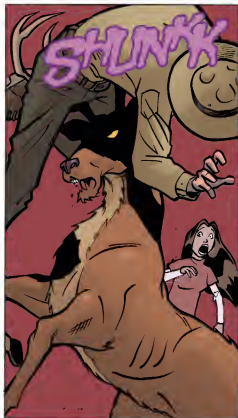


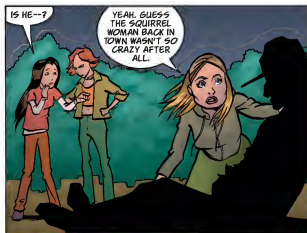
HEY, WHEN YOU'RE GONNA PRAY OBEISANCE TO NATURE AND THE EARTH AND THE MOON, YOU KINDA NEED THE MOON.

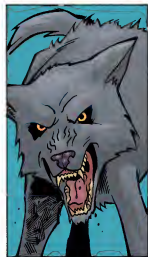














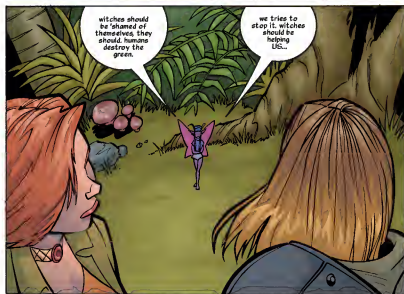
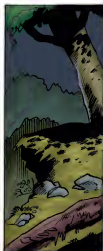


KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN, DAWN. I DON'T THINK IT'S OVER YET.



WE DROVE THE ANIMALS AWAY. IF YOU WANT TO KILL US--WHATEVER YOU ARE--YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO COME OUT AND DO IT YOURSELF.

UM, WILLOW... IS THAT REALLY A GOOD IDEA?

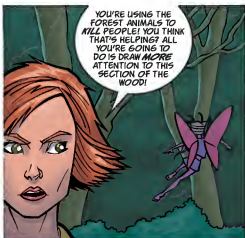


witches should be 'shamed of themselves, they should...humans destroy the green.

we tries to stop it. witches should be helping US...



...not them.





GET IT OFF!!
GODDESS, GET
IT OFF ME!!

I CAN'T...IT'S
LIKE MAGIC
DOESN'T
AFFECT
IT...

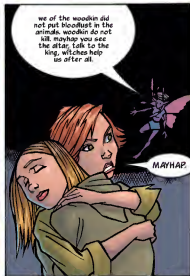


WE DIDN'T COME
HERE TO HARM
YOU, BUT GET IT
OFF HER NOW OR
IN HECATE'S NAME
**I WILL KILL
YOU ALL!**



draw back the
boggart.

IT'S...IT'S
DISGUSTING.
WHEN IT
TOUCHES YOU
...IT FEELS SO
FILTHY.



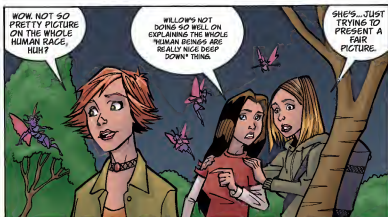
we of the woodkin did
not put bloodlust in the
animak. woodkin do not
kill. maybe you see
the altar, talk to the
king, witches help
us after all.

MAYHAP.



HUMAN BEINGS
CAN BE PRETTY MUCH
THOUGHTLESS A LOT
OF TIMES...

AND THEY CAN
BE KINDA GREEDY-
LIKE SOMETIMES...
MAJORLY SELF-
INVOLVED AND...





I COULD
AT THAT!









GRRRRHHH!



VILE
WITCHES!

YOU
HAVE SHATTERED THE
WARDS THAT PROTECTED
THE ALTAR. YOU ARE IN
LEAGUE WITH THEM, THE
DEFILERS, THE
DESTRUCTORS.



THAT'S
NOT
TRUE!!



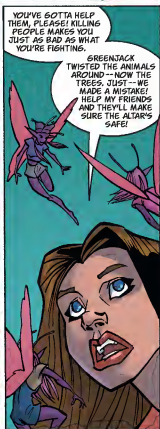
NO CHOICE NOW,
CRUEL WITCHES. CAN'T
HIDE THE ALTAR
ANYMORE.



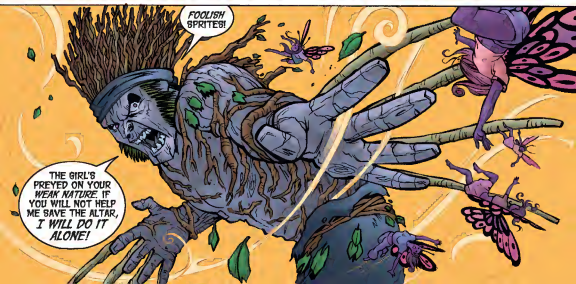
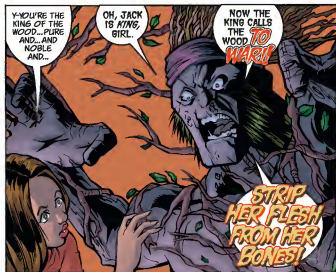
W-WAIT.
MAYBE WE CAN
H-HELP.

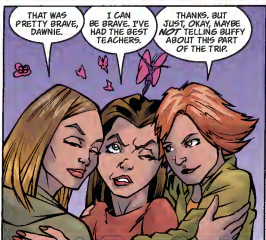
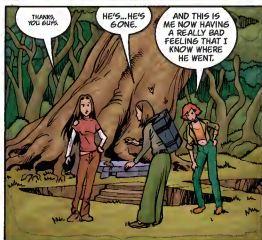


CAN'T HIDE
IT, THEN I
MUST KEEP IT
SAFE. I MUST TAKE
THE EYES OF ALL
WHO SEE IT.











I DON'T GET IT. IT'S SUNRISE, BUT WE WEREN'T IN THERE ANYWHERE NEAR--

YOU NEVER READ FAERIE TALES? MORTALS WANDER INTO A FAERIE WOOD, TIME GETS ALL WONKY. IT'S TRADITIONAL.

OH, WEIRD.

ANY THOUGHTS ON WHAT WE DO NOW?

YOU DID HEAR THAT PART ABOUT PAINTING EVERY TREE WITH HUMAN BLOOD? NOT GIVING US MUCH CHOICE. WE FIND GREENJACK...

...AND WE BURN HIM DOWN.

WILLOW, WE CAN'T. MYSTICAL CREATURES DON'T EXIST UNDER THE SAME RULES AS WE DO. IN THEIR EYES, THEY'RE JUST FIGHTING BACK.

HOW ARE WE ANY BETTER IF WE JUST KILL GREENJACK?

A GREENJACK'S ONLY PART OF A GREATER FORCE. IF WE DESTROY HIM, HE'LL JUST GO SOMEPLACE ELSE. COURSE, THEN HE'LL BE FICED, SO OKAY WE COULD TRY TO TRAP HIM, TRY TO MAKE HIM SEE REASON.

I'VE GOT SOME SPELLS IN MIND TO HOLD HIM TEMPORARILY, UNTIL WE MAKE HIM REALIZE WE WANT TO HELP.

OKAY...



"...LET'S JUST HOPE
"TEMPORARILY" IS
LONG ENOUGH."



LORD, I'M
BEAT. WHEN THIS
JOB IS FINISHED,
I'M GONNA SLEEP
FOR ABOUT
A YEAR.

GARY!
HEY,
GARY!



YOU THINK MAYBE
YOU COULD GET SOME
COFFEE IN HERE THAT
DOESN'T TASTE LIKE
SLUDGE?

COFFEE'S
THE LEAST
OF OUR
TROUBLES.



WE HAD ANOTHER
DEATH. ONE OF THE
RANGERS, LAST
NIGHT. TRAMPLED
TO DEATH.



JESUS.

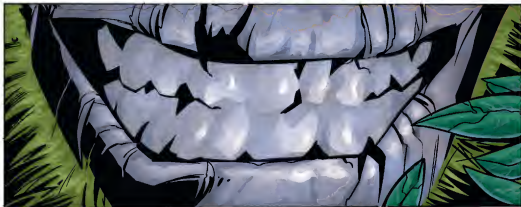
SOMEONE'S REALLY
GOT IT IN FOR US. THEY
DON'T PAY US ENOUGH
FOR THIS.

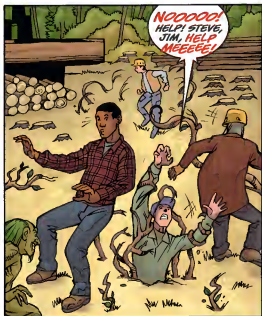


THEY SAY IT'S ANIMALS,
FREAK ATTACKS AND STUFF.
AND YEAH, I'VE SEEN THOSE
VIDEO SHOWS ON TV,
"WHEN ANIMALS
ATTACK."

BUT THIS IS TOO
MUCH. MAKES YOU
WONDER IF SOMEBODY ELSE
IS BEHIND IT. SOME OF THE
TREE HUGGERS SURE HATE
US ENOUGH TO DO
SOMETHING SICK.



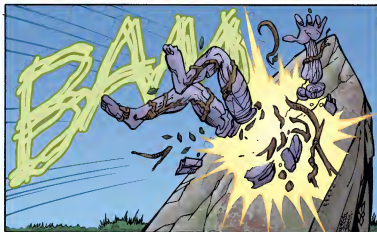
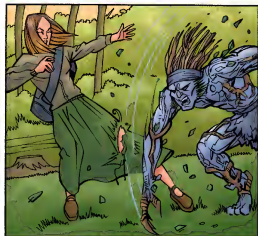
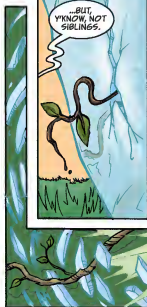


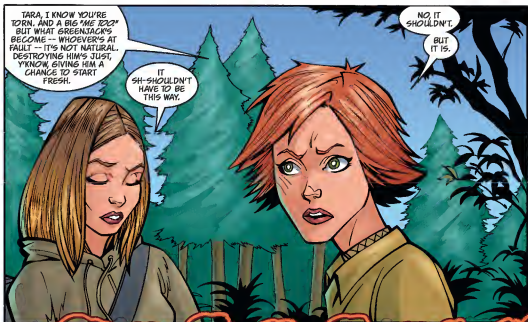








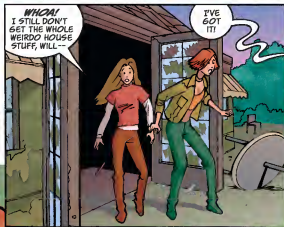






**SILVA VICTUS
PERUSTUM!**

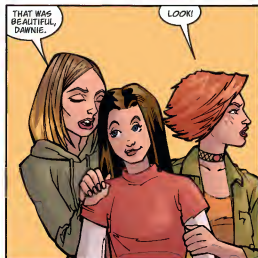






I'M... I'M
SORRY WE CAN'T
DO MORE FOR YOU.
BUT AT LEAST YOU'LL BE
SAFE IF YOU STICK IN
THIS SECTION OF
THE WOODS.

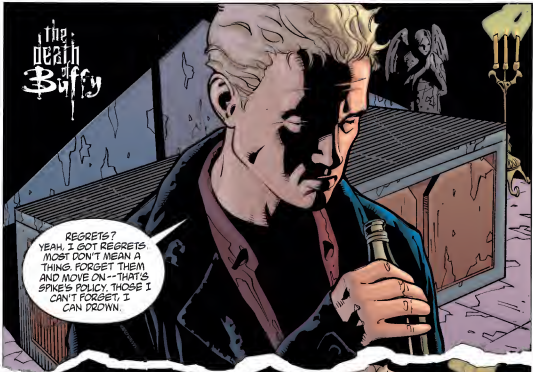
YOU AND
THE ALIAR ARE
PROTECTED AGAIN.
BY WITCHES'
MAGIC--





I DON'T KNOW. I JUST HOPE IT'S A MORE
GREENJACK-FRIENDLY PLACE WHEN HE
DOES DECIDE TO COME BACK.

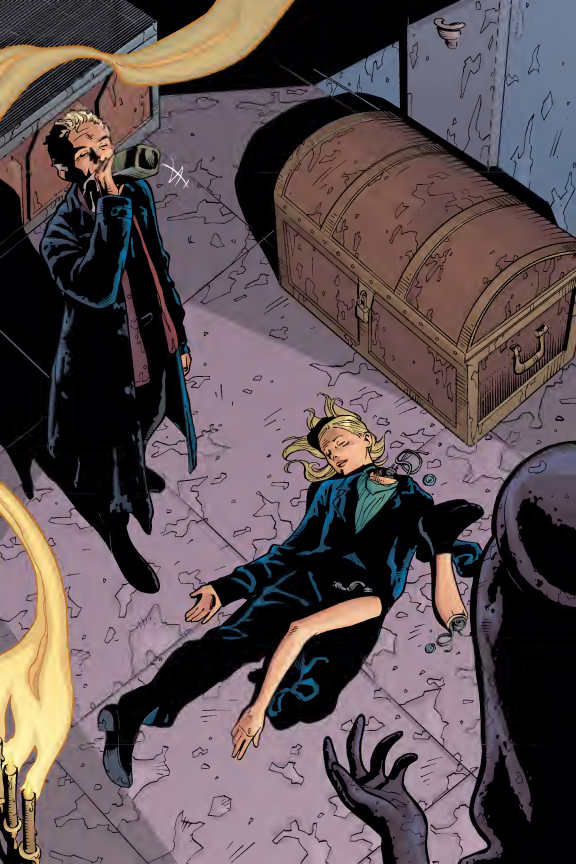


A close-up, high-contrast illustration of Spike. He has his signature blonde hair and a dark, shadowed face. He is wearing a dark jacket over a red shirt and is holding a bottle of wine or liquor in his right hand. The background is dark and indistinct.

REGRETS?
YEAH, I GOT REGRETS.
MOST DON'T MEAN A
THING. FORGET THEM
AND MOVE ON--THAT'S
SPIKE'S POLICY. THOSE I
CAN'T FORGET, I
CAN DROWN.

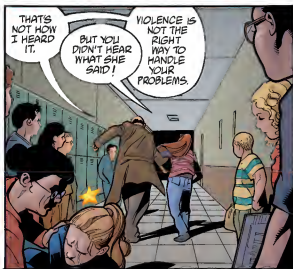
A full-body illustration of Spike standing in a dark, dilapidated environment. He is holding the same bottle in his right hand. A bright, yellow-orange flame or energy trail emanates from his left hand, extending upwards and to the right. The background shows the ruins of a building with broken windows and debris.

ALL OF
'EM, THAT IS,
EXCEPT FOR
YOU.



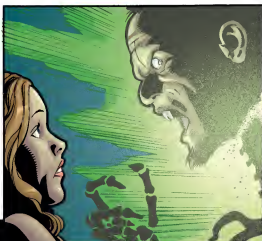












IT'S H-H-HARD TO
TREAT ANYBODY
RIGHT WITH A
STAKE IN YOUR
BACK.



NOTHING
LIKE AN EASY
CATCH, IS
THERE?



YEAH,
WELL, CATCH
THIS!



THIS SURE
IS A LOT HARDER
WITHOUT BUFFY
AROUND.





WELL, WELL.
BACK IN
SUNNYDALE.

AND THIS
TIME, WE DON'T
LEAVE
WITHOUT THE
SCROLLS.



AGREED.
BUT WHERE TO
BEGIN?

AH, YES.
THE ETERNAL
QUESTION.

I SAY
THE SEWERS.
AFTER ALL,
THAT'S WHERE
THIS ALL
BEGAN.



"AGREED."

DO YOU THINK DAWN WANTS STRAWBERRIES ON HER PANCAKES THIS MORNING? OR BLUE-BERRIES? I HOPE NOT BLUE-BERRIES-- WE DON'T HAVE ANY BLUE-BERRIES.

I'M MORE CONCERNED WHY SHE'S NOT DOWN-STAIRS YET. I'M GOING TO GO SEE WHAT'S KEEPING HER.

DAWN! COME ON, YOU'LL BE LATE FOR SCHOOL!

RRRRRINGG

MONDO WEIRD. WHO WOULD BE CALLING THE HOUSE THIS EARLY?

IT'S GOTTA BE GILES WONDERING WHEN WE'RE GOING TO RETURN THE STUFF WE BORROWED...



HELLO? OH, PRINCIPAL RICHARDSON... NO, BUFFY ISN'T HOME. SHE'S OUT... *SH*... WORKING.

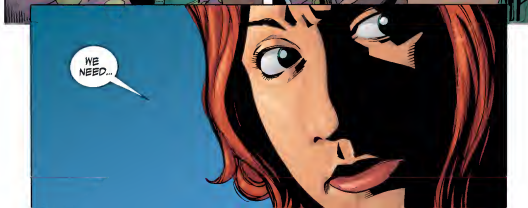
SH... NO. THERE WAS NO MESSAGE ON THE MACHINE.

YOU MEAN THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH DAWN?

SHE WHAT? NO, I... I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT.

ABSOLUTELY. I'LL BE SURE TO GIVE BUFFY THE MESSAGE.

OH BOY. WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM.



"GILES."

THANK YOU FOR COMING, MR. GILES, BUT I HAD HOPED TO SPEAK WITH MS. SUMMERS -- THAT IS, BUFFY HERSELF. I UNDERSTAND SHE IS DAWN'S LEGAL GUARDIAN?

YES, BUT SINCE THEIR MOTHER'S UNTIMELY DEATH, BUFFY HAS BEEN QUITE BUSY DOING ALL SHE CAN TO... MAKE ENDS MEET. IT'S HARD FOR HER TO GET AWAY DURING THE BUSINESS DAY.

SO, I WAS HOPING WE COULD SETTLE THIS WITHOUT HER HAVING TO COME SEE YOU.

I UNDERSTAND HOW DIFFICULT, AND UNFORTUNATE, THE SITUATION IS, BUT WE SIMPLY CAN'T HAVE INCIDENTS LIKE YESTERDAY'S AT THIS SCHOOL. SOMETHING NEEDS TO BE DONE.

TELL ME AGAIN, WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE SUMMERS GIRLS?

I'M A LONG-TIME, TRUSTED FRIEND OF THE FAMILY, SO I FEEL CONFIDENT SPEAKING ON BEHALF OF BUFFY.

I CAN GUARANTEE YOU, SIR, THAT THERE WILL BE NO MORE INCIDENTS OF THIS TYPE WITH DAWN.

AND HOW DO YOU PROPOSE TO DO THAT?

MR. RICHARDSON, YOU MAY NOT KNOW THIS, BUT I WAS A SCHOOL LIBRARIAN FOR QUITE A NUMBER OF YEARS. I'VE DEALT WITH DIFFICULT TEEN **CONFLICTS** MANY TIMES OVER.

I CAN PROVIDE MORE GUIDANCE TO THE SUMMERS FAMILY NOW THAT I'M AWARE OF THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.

WELL...I'D RATHER BE HEARING THIS FROM DAWN'S GUARDIAN INSTEAD OF A FAMILY FRIEND--NO MATTER WHAT YOUR PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE. BUT...I THINK IT WILL DO...

...FOR NOW.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDERSTANDING.



OKAY, SO GILES MANAGED TO CONVINCE THE PRINCIPAL THAT HE DID NOT NEED TO MEET WITH BUFFY IN PERSON, BUT--

SOMEHOW WE STILL MANAGED TO GET OUR BUTTS KICKED BY A BUNCH OF VAMPIRES WHEN THE VAMPIRE **SLAYER** WAS NOT AROUND TO BACK US UP...

SORRY, I'M STILL ON LAST NIGHT.



CAN WE TALK ABOUT DAWN FOR A SECOND?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, POCKY-BEAR. WE STILL WON. WE ALWAYS WIN.

YOU'RE RIGHT, DAWN. AFTER ALL, THE VAMPS ARE GOING TO COME AFTER **ALL** OF US.



WHEN DID YOU BECOME SUCH A FRAIDY CAT? WE'RE ADULTS AND CAN HANDLE OURSELVES AGAINST MONSTERS-- POWERFUL WITCHES, REMEMBER?

I AGREE WITH WILLOW; WE SHOULD BE MORE CONCERNED ABOUT DAWN'S PROBLEM AT SCHOOL.



I CAN'T BELIEVE BUFFY'S ONLY BEEN GONE FOR A COUPLE WEEKS, AND I'M GOING ALL BLUBBERING BABY. I GUESS GETTING SLAPPED AROUND BY A VAMP WILL DO THAT TO A GUY.

I...I DON'T KNOW WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO ABOUT DAWN. WE'LL JUST HAVE TO STRESS TO HER THAT SHE'S GOT TO KEEP A LOW PROFILE UNTIL...WELL, UNTIL SHE'S IN COLLEGE.



XANDER, IT DOESN'T WORK LIKE THAT.

WHAT IF WE GET SPIKE TO HELP US PATROL? THEN WE CAN FOCUS ON MAINTAINING A STABLE HOME ENVIRONMENT--



NO! NO WAY!



WHAT IS WRONG
WITH YOU PEOPLE?!
SPIKE
IS A **VAMPIRE!**
HE IS PART OF THE
PROBLEM, NOT THE
SOLUTION!



OKAY,
EVERYONE, LET'S
CALM DOWN HERE.
WE'VE BEEN IN A
STATE OF SHOCK
SINCE... BUT
THINGS ARE STILL
HAPPENING
AROUND US. WE
CAN'T IGNORE
THAT ANY
MORE.

LOOKS
LIKE YOU HAVE
ALL THE ANSWERS
AS USUAL,
WILLOW.



ME, I JUST WANT
A LITTLE MORE TIME.
EVERYTHING'S MOVING
SO FAST. I CAN'T
EVEN BREATHE.



WE'RE ALL FEELING
CONFUSED, XANDER,
BUT WE'LL NEED TO
MAKE SOME HARD
DECISIONS, AND
SOON.

WE ALL FEEL THE
LOSS OF BUFFY, BUT IT'S
TIME TO MOVE BEYOND
HER DEATH--NOT FORGET
ABOUT IT, BUT WE HAVE
TO GET ON WITH OUR
LIVES.

AND SPEAK-
ING OF GETTING
ON WITH OUR LIVES,
WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT
IF WE HAD A HAPPY
ANNOUNCEMENT TO
SHARE WITH THE GROUP?
XANDER?



NOT NOW,
ANYA.



GOOD
EVENING, MY
FRIENDS.

I MUST
SAY, I AM QUITE
SURPRISED. I DID
NOT EXPECT YOU
TO RETURN SO
SOON.



YOUR EFFORTS AT
DECEPTION ARE
WASTED ON US,
TEMPTRESS. YOU
KNEW WE WOULD
RETURN WHEN
OUR BROTHER
WAS KILLED.



AND
YOU KNOW
WHY WE'VE
COME.



BUT LET'S MAKE
THINGS EASY ON ALL
OF US. WE'VE COME
FOR THE SCROLL.



SCROLL?
I'M AFRAID YOU
HAVE TO BE A LITTLE
MORE SPECIFIC. YOU
SEE, I HAVE MANY
SCROLLS
FOR SALE.



DON'T
TRIFLE WITH
US.



YOU STOLE THIS
FROM OUR
BROTHER.



IT IS
NOT YOURS TO
SELL.







THINK YOU'RE NOT
A **MONSTER**
BECAUSE YOU GOT
YOUR HOT-ON FOR
BUFFY?

THINK
YOU'RE **GOOD**
BECAUSE YOU
GOT SOME STUPID
CHIP IN YOUR
HEAD?

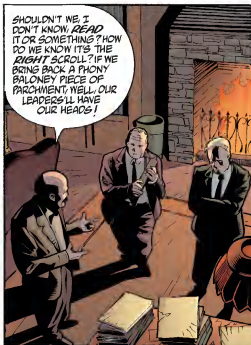


THINK YOU'RE
ONE OF US
JUST BECAUSE...
BECAUSE...

WRONG.
YOU'RE
NOT.



YOU'RE
SO
DEAD.







HOLY
FLU--



NOT BAD, SPIKE,
BUT YOU'RE JUST
NOT THE SAME
WITHOUT YOUR
BITE.

YOU
SEE,
WHILE
YOU'VE
BEEN COOPED UP
IN HERE DRINKING,
GETTING SOFTER,
I'VE BEEN
HONORING
BUFFY'S
MEMORY...



GETTING
STRONGER. YOU
SEE, SPIKE, YOU'RE
A USER, A PARASITE.
YOU'VE BEEN
CLINGING TO BUFFY
SINCE DAY ONE,
BUT IT'S
OVER.

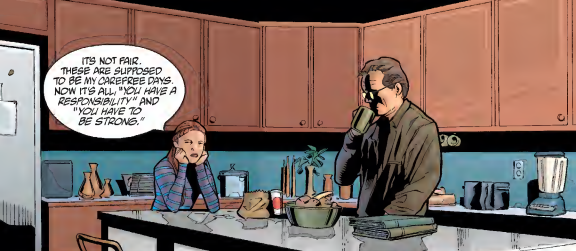
I WON'T
HAVE YOU
CLINGING TO
HER MEMORY,
TOO.



XANDER
...WAIT...

NO, SPIKE, NO WAITING.
NO ONE'S GOING
TO MISS YOU,
YOU KNOW.

STOP!



IT'S NOT FAIR.
THESE ARE SUPPOSED
TO BE MY CAREFREE DAYS.
NOW IT'S ALL, "YOU HAVE A
RESPONSIBILITY" AND
"YOU HAVE TO
BE STRONG."



DAWN, I DON'T WANT TO
SUGGEST THAT YOU MISS
OUT ON YOUR TEENAGE YEARS,
BUT YOU HAVE TO BE AWARE OF
THE...UNFORTUNATE
SITUATION WE'RE
ALL IN.



SOMETIMES LIFE
HANDS YOU QUITE
THE WILD CARD
AND THE DECISION
ON *WHAT TO DO*
WITH SUCH CHALLENGES
...WELL, IT OFTEN
DEFINES WHO
WE ARE.



YOU'RE
REALLY
WEIRD.



...BUT THANKS
FOR THE TALK.
I'M GLAD I
HAVE YOU
AROUND.









ALL RIGHT,
ALL RIGHT. SO I TOOK
IT. BUT THERE'S NO WAY
I'M GIVING YOU THE
KEY TO—

OH, HELL.
KICK TO THE HEAD
AND I'M ALL LOOK
WHO'S TALKING
NOW.



JUST
COULDN'T
KEEP YOUR
HANDS OFF
THE ELECTRO-
LOVE DOLL,
HUH? YOU'RE
ONE SICK
MONSTER,
SPIKE.

IT'S NOT
LIKE THAT. I TOOK
THE DAMN THING TO
HIDE IT AWAY, NOT
REBUILD IT. AND
IT'S GOING TO STAY
HIDDEN.

BUT, SPIKE, THINK ABOUT
IT. IF WORD GETS OUT THAT
THE SLAYER IS DEAD, ALL
THE DEMONS OUT THERE
WOULD RUN WILD THROUGH
TOWN. WE LIVE ON
THE HELLMOUTH,
REMEMBER?

NICE TRY,
LOVE, BUT I
DON'T REALLY
MUCH CARE
WHAT HAPPENS
TO SUNNY-
DALE.

ALL RIGHT.
IF YOU WON'T
DO IT FOR
SUNNYDALE,
THEN DO IT
FOR DAWN.

...FOR
DAWN...

YOU
SURE KNOW
HOW TO KICK A
GUN WHEN
HE'S DOWN,
RED.

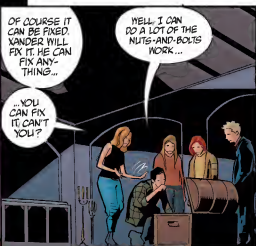
SHE'S
DOWN-
STAIRS.





WOW,
WHAT A
MESS

I WONDER
IF IT CAN BE
FIXED...



OF COURSE IT
CAN BE FIXED.
XANDER WILL
FIX IT. HE CAN
FIX ANY-
THING...

WELL, I CAN
DO A LOT OF THE
NUTS-AND-BOLTS
WORK...

...YOU
CAN FIX
IT, CAN'T
YOU?



...BUT AS FAR AS
THE PROGRAMMING
GOES, I'M WAY OUTTA
MY LEAGUE.



I MIGHT HAVE TO
READ UP A LITTLE
ON ROBOTICS, BUT
I SHOULD BE ABLE
TO HANDLE THE
SOFTWARE END
OF THINGS.



OKAY, SO WE
CAN MAYBE,
POSSIBLY, FIX HER
HOW LONG WILL
IT TAKE YOU
GUYS?

BEATS ME,
BUT IF I HAD TO
GUESS, I'D SAY WE
GET HER UP TO
SPEED IN
ABOUT...

"...THREE
WEEKS."









GOD! I'M
SO SICK OF THIS!
DO THEY REALLY
THINK THAT STUPID
ROBOT COULD
REPLACE MY
SISTER?

WEEK IN,
WEEK OUT,
THEY PLAY WITH IT,
TRYING TO MAKE IT
ACT LIKE BUFFY.
WELL, IT
CAN'T.



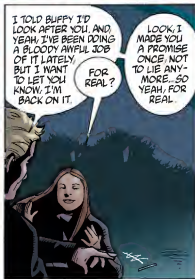
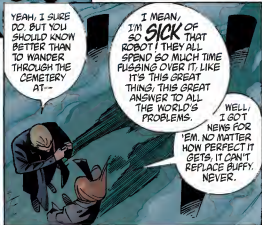
I MEAN, I'D
BE A BETTER
SLAYER
THAN *THAT*
THING.



AW, ISN'T THIS
CUTE, A WANNABE
SLAYER. AND JUST
IN TIME FOR
DINNER, TOO.

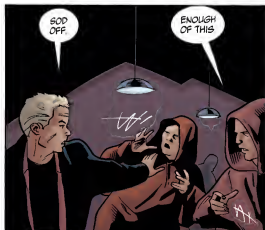


EEK!









SOD
OFF.

ENOUGH
OF THIS



TE AZEW
NOANLI
HORIK.



LET'S TRY
THIS AGAIN.
TELL US DO
YOU KNOW
A WITCH?

Lito
Beer

YES.

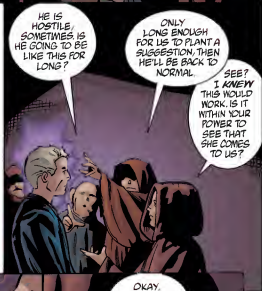
HEY! WHAT'D YOU
DO TO HIM?



SIMPLE
CHARM SPELL. A
GREAT TOOL FOR
DEALING
WITH HOSTILE
CREATURES

AND IS SHE
POWERFUL?

YES.



HE IS
HOSTILE,
SOMETIMES IS
HE GOING TO BE
LIKE THIS FOR
LONG?

ONLY
LONG ENOUGH
FOR US TO PLANT A
SUGGESTION, THEN
HE'LL BE BACK TO
NORMAL.

SEE?
I KNEW
THIS WOULD
WORK. IS IT
WITHIN YOUR
POWER TO
SEE THAT
SHE COMES
TO US?

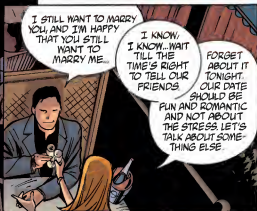


YES.

OKAY,
HERE'S WHAT
YOU NEED
TO DO.



HOW NICE THIS IS! US GOING ON A DATE, IT'S ALMOST LIKE WE'RE JUST DATING AGAIN AND NOT ENGAGED--WE ARE STILL ENGAGED, RIGHT?



I STILL WANT TO MARRY YOU, AND I'M HAPPY THAT YOU STILL WANT TO MARRY ME...

I KNOW, I KNOW...WAIT TILL THE TIME'S RIGHT TO TELL OUR FRIENDS

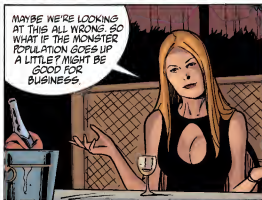
FORGET ABOUT IT TONIGHT. OUR DATE SHOULD BE FUN AND ROMANTIC AND NOT ABOUT THE STRESS. LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE.



SO, HOW LONG DO YOU THINK WE'LL BE ABLE TO PULL OFF THIS WHOLE 'SLAYER'S-NOT-DEAD SCAM'?



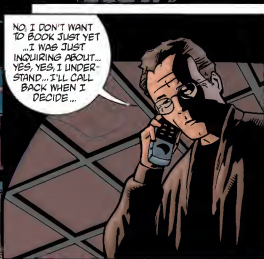
WE'VE BEEN DOING OKAY FOR OVER A MONTH NOW--IF DOING OKAY MEANS BARELY GETTING BY EACH AND EVERY NIGHT.



MAYBE WE'RE LOOKING AT THIS ALL WRONG. SO WHAT IF THE MONSTER POPULATION GOES UP A LITTLE? MIGHT BE GOOD FOR BUSINESS.



THAT MIGHT CUT INTO THE HUMAN POPULATION IN SLAYERLESS SUNNYDALE. MORE WINE?



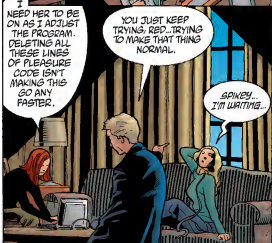


WELL, BUFFY LOOKS LIKE THAT A.I. SCRIPT HAS MORE LINE ERRORS THAN I THOUGHT.

MMMM... THAT FEELS SO GOOD! SPIKE, YOU HUNKY LOVE STUD, HOLD ME IN YOUR MANLY ARMS.

IS THERE ANY WAY TO MAKE IT STOP DOING THAT? OR CAN YOU AT LEAST SHUT IT OFF?

...AND DON'T KEEP CALLING IT BUFFY.



I NEED HER TO BE ON AS I ADJUST THE PROGRAM. DELETING ALL THESE LINES OF PLEASURE CODE ISN'T MAKING THIS GO ANY FASTER.

YOU JUST KEEP TRYING, RED...TRYING TO MAKE THAT THING NORMAL.

SPIKE? ... I'M WAITING...



IF SHE KEEPS BREAKING, I'LL KEEP FIXING HER. NO THANKS TO YOU.

WHAT? HOW WAS I TO KNOW THAT APPEL DEMON WOULD GO ALL BERSEKER BEFORE IT DIED.



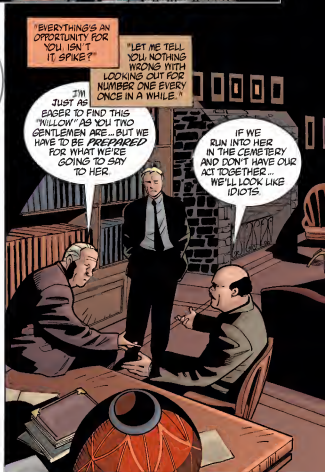
SPIKE, IF YOU'RE HERE TO MAKE FRIENDLY BANTER, DON'T.

RIGHT, I'LL CUT THE CHATTER AND GIVE YOU THE SKINNY. NEW TRIO OF DEMONS IN TOWN. THING IS, THEY'RE LOOKING FOR YOU.



ME?

YEAH, WELL, I SORT OF TOLD THEM ABOUT YOU BEING A POWERFUL WITCH.







ABOUT
TIME YOU
SHOWED.

HEY,
MAN, IT
WASN'T EASY
SLIPPING
AWAY
FROM--

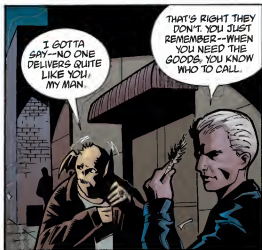


SAVE THE
EXCUSES, MATE.
I'VE HEARD 'EM
ALL, MOST OF 'EM
MORE THAN
ONCE.



SO, uh, DID
YOU GET IT,
OR WHAT?

OF COURSE
I GOT IT. BUT THE
REAL QUESTION
IS, DO YOU HAVE
THE MALIAN
TWIGS?



I GOTTA
SAY--NO ONE
DELIVERS QUITE
LIKE YOU,
MY MAN.

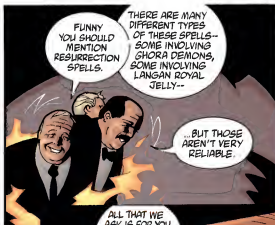
THAT'S RIGHT THEY
DON'T. YOU JUST
REMEMBER--WHEN
YOU NEED THE
GOODS, YOU KNOW
WHO TO CALL.



WELL, WELL
NOT A BAD
NIGHT'S
WORK.

GOTCHA.









LOOK, NANCY BOY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU GOT AGAINST ME--

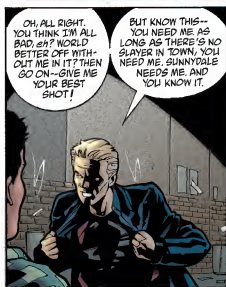


DON'T KNOW WHAT I HAVE AGAINST YOU? LET'S SEE, HOW ABOUT LYING, BACK-STABBING, AND DOUBLE-DEALING. I SAW YOU TONIGHT, AND--



AND WHAT IS IT YOU THINK YOU SAW? WELL, I'LL TELL YOU YOU SAW A GUY MAKING A LIVING. NOTHING MORE THAN THAT.

A LIVING? YOU'RE A VAMPIRE, SPIKE! YOU KNOW, THE BAD GUYS! I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOU LIVING!



OH, ALL RIGHT. YOU THINK I'M ALL BAD, eh? WORLD BETTER OFF WITHOUT ME IN IT? THEN GO ON--GIVE ME YOUR BEST SHOT!

BUT KNOW THIS-- YOU NEED ME, AS LONG AS THERE'S NO SLAYER IN TOWN, YOU NEED ME. SUNNYDALE NEEDS ME, AND YOU KNOW IT.



THOUGHT SO.





MISTRESS!
MISTRESS!

WHAT
IS IT,
WORM
?



THE
LUPER HAS
HATCHED!

WHAT?
BUT IT
CAN'T
BE...



NOW THIS, I DID
NOT ANTICIPATE. I
DIDN'T THINK
THOSE BUMBLING
FOOLS WOULD
ACTUALLY SUCCEED
IN DESTROYING
THE SCROLL.

I DON'T
SEE HOW...
THEY'RE NOT
NEARLY POWER-
FUL ENOUGH
--THEY DON'T
HAVE A FRACTION
OF THE POWER
THEIR BROTHER
HAD.



THEY MUST
HAVE HAD
OUTSIDE
HELP.



YOU! I NEED TO LEARN
WHO WAS BEHIND THE LUPER'S
RELEASE,
AND I NEED
TO KNOW **NOW!**

YES,
MISTRESS.
RIGHT AWAY,
MISTRESS.

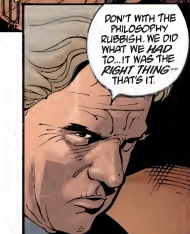


WE'RE
FREE! WE'RE
FREE!

WE ARE
FREE, RIGHT?



WE'VE ESCAPED
THE CURSE OF
OUR PEOPLE--
THAT WE KNOW.
BUT FREE?



DON'T WITH THE
PHILOSOPHY
RUBBISH. WE DID
WHAT WE HAD
TO...IT WAS THE
RIGHT THING--
THAT'S IT.



GOOD THING WE
WERE ABLE TO FIND
THAT WITCH.
RESURRECTION
SPELL. HA! SHE
SURE WAS A
BUNCH OF
LAUGHS.



THAT SPELL
SHE TOOK.
WILL IT
WORK?



YEAH, SURE, IF
SHE'S POWERFUL
ENOUGH TO PERFORM
IT. THEN AGAIN, THE
THING ABOUT MAGIC?
THERE'S ALWAYS
CONSEQUENCES.







SHE SEEMS TO BE PERFORMING ADEQUATELY ON PATROL AT NIGHT, BUT FOR US TO BE SURE THIS WILL WORK, IMPROVING SOCIAL INTERACTION IS A MUST.

DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S WHAT WE SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON? WE NEED HELP FIGHTING MONSTERS, NOT MAKING FRIENDS.

MR. GILES! MR. GILES!



AH... PRINCIPAL RICHARDSON. WHAT A PLEASANT SURPRISE RUNNING INTO YOU HERE.

THAT SLICE OF MINE HAS ME LOSING MORE BALLS...THIS MORNING WAS THE WORST. FIGURE I'D PICK UP ANOTHER SLEEVE.



SO... WHERE'S DAWN?



SHE'S... ah...

SHE'S AT A FRIEND'S HOUSE.

FRIENDS ARE IMPORTANT, BUT NOT AS IMPORTANT AS FIGHTING MONSTERS.



I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON, BUT I CAN TELL SOMETHING IS. AND I DON'T LIKE IT.



"WHAT'S UP, WILL?
YOU SOUNDED
CRAZY ANXIOUS
ON THE PHONE
YESTERDAY."



"YEAH, SORRY I'M
ALL STRESSY...IT'S
JUST THAT I THINK...

"...THIS IS
GONNA
SOUND
CRAZY...

"...BUT I THINK
I HAVE A
SOLUTION TO
OUR PROBLEMS"

AUTOLUX

SLOW DOWN, CHIEF.
FIRST TELL US WHO
WE'RE FIGHTING. A
GROUP OF VAMPS?
A RENEGADE
DEMON?

I HOPE IT DOESN'T
INVOLVE THE OLD HIGH
SCHOOL. I'M SO TIRED
OF HELLMOUTH THIS
AND HELLMOUTH THAT.

NO. I MEANT
THE PROBLEM
WITH BUFFY.

I THINK
WE SHOULD
BRING
HER BACK.



NOT FUNNY,
WILL. HOW IN
HELL ARE WE
SUPPOSED
TO--



YOU'RE NOT
TH-THINKING
OF DOING A
SPELL...ARE
YOU?



IT'S NOT JUST FOR
US. IT'S FOR *HER*.
SHE'S SUFFERING
RIGHT NOW...IN
SOME KIND OF
HELL
DIMENSION.



AND THERE ARE
SO MANY DIFFERENT
HELL DIMENSIONS.
SHE COULD BE
ANYWHERE.



TIME OUT. REWIND.
I GOT ONE WORD
FOR YOU--**FREAKIN'
ZOMBIE!**

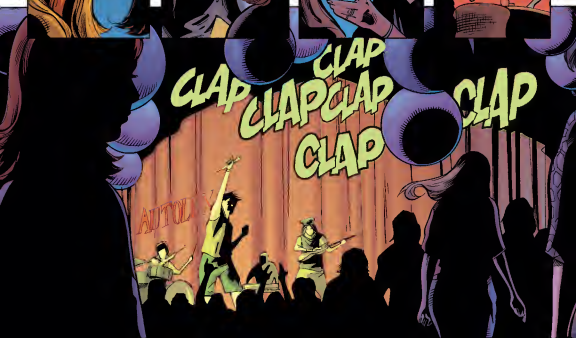


XANDER
HAS A POINT
--THIS IS *MAY*
WAY OVER OUR
HEADS.



NO, I CAN DO
THIS. IT'S THE
BEST THING
FOR DAWN. FOR
SUNNYDALE, FOR
BUFFY. I KNOW
IT'S CRAZY, BUT
WE'VE GOT
TO.







IT WASN'T
THAT CRAZY OF
AN IDEA. MAYBE
I'VE BEEN
STAYING OUT
TOO LATE.

THERE'S
NO SUCH
THING AS
TOO LATE.



WHO ARE YOU
AND WHAT DO YOU
WANT?

I CAN'T
BELIEVE I SAID
THAT... I **MUST**
BE TIRED.

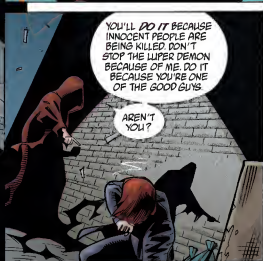
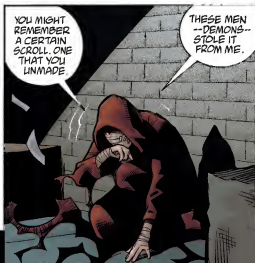
WHO I AM IS
COMA. WHAT I
WANT IS TO
GET OUT OF
SUNNYDALE.



BUT I HAVE SOME
UNFINISHED BUSINESS...
SOME BUSINESS THAT
INVOLVES YOU,
WITCH!



TALK, TALK, TALK
WHAT HAPPENED
TO THE DAYS
WHEN ALL A
CREATURE OF
THE NIGHT
WANTED WAS
TO SUCK
YOUR BLOOD
?





TELL
ME THE ODDS
AGAIN...NO DON'T
TELL ME THE
ODDS.

IT'S AGAINST
ALL THE LAWS OF
NATURE AND
PRACTICALLY
IMPOSSIBLE.

"I'M GOING
TO PRETEND
THOSE ARE
NOT THE ODDS."

"GUYS, I CAN
DO THIS...**WE**
CAN DO THIS."





"AT WHAT POINT DO WE TELL GILES? HE COULD USE SOMETHING TO DO ...ALL HE DOES IS MORE AROUND THE STORE AND GET IN THE WAY OF MY COMPLETING TRANSACTIONS WITH CUSTOMERS."

"LET'S WAIT UNTIL WE GATHER ALL THE SUPPLIES"

"NO NEED TO GET EVERYONE ALL ALARMY IF WE CAN'T GET THE RIGHT STUFF"

"YEAH, TARA'S RIGHT-- BUT I'M INCLINED TO THINK THAT WE SHOULDN'T TELL ANYBODY UNTIL WE PULL IT OFF. NOT GILES SPIKE, ESPECIALLY NOT DAWN."

"THEY MIGHT NOT UNDER- STAND."

"I'M NOT SURE I UNDER- STAND."

"XANDER, IF BUFFY WERE HANGING OFF A CLIFF BY HER FINGERS, YOU'D REACH OUT TO GRAB HER, WOULDN'T YOU?"

WE ALL WOULD.

"THIS IS THE SAME THING, ONLY SHE'S ALREADY FALLEN AND WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO REACH DOWN AND STILL GRAB HER"

WANNA PLACE BETS ON THIS SLUG FEST?

NOT REALLY. THE WITCH WILL NOT EASILY BE DEFEATED.





MAGIC
ISN'T SCIENCE.
IT REQUIRES YOU
TO BELIEVE...AND
YOUR BELIEF WILL
GIVE IT LIFE AND
MAKE IT
POSSIBLE. WE
HAVE TO ALL
BELIEVE.

IT'S
THE RIGHT
THING. ARE
YOU WITH
ME?



INTO EVERY
GENERATION,
A SLAYER
IS BORN



ONE GIRL... IN ALL
THE WORLD, A
CHOSEN ONE



ONE BORN
WITH THE
STRENGTH
AND SKILL TO HUNT
THE VAMPIRES...



...TO STOP THE
SPREAD OF
THEIR EVIL.



THROUGH-
OUT THE
AGES, SHE
HAS ALWAYS
BEEN THERE.



FACING
THE
DARKNESS,
WHEREVER SHE
MIGHT FIND IT.



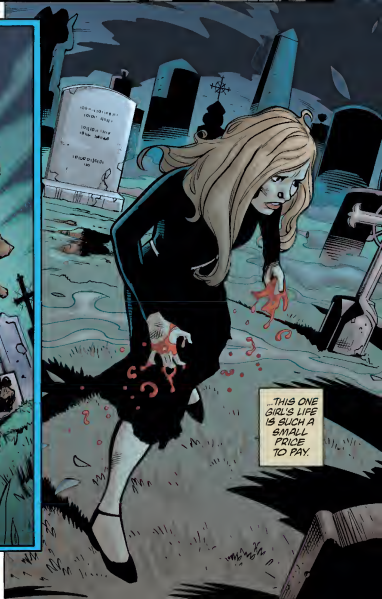
INEVITABLY,
THOUGH, THE
DARKNESS
TAKES HER, AND
THE SLAYER DIES.



IN THE
FACE OF
SUCH
EVIL....



...THIS ONE
GIRL'S LIFE
IS SUCH A
SMALL
PRICE
TO PAY.



BUT THIS
SLAYER IS
DIFFERENT.

SHE DID
NOT
FACE THE
DARKNESS
ALONE.

AND HER
FRIENDS
WILL NOT
LET HER GO.



*the
end*

REUNION











NO ADMITTANCE

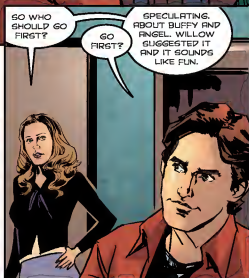
I HEAR THUMPING AND MUTED ENGLISH PAIN. SHE DID IT AGAIN.

ANYR'S RIGHT. IT'S 'CAUSE OF SEEING ANGEL. SHE'S ALL OFF-BALANCE. MAKES ME WONDER WHAT WENT ON.



YOU GUYS ARE FREE TO SPECULATE ON WHAT HAPPENED WITH ANGEL IF YOU WANT.

BUT I'VE GOT AN OBSCURE SPELL INGREDIENT TO BUY FROM A NASTY OLD WITCH. SHE REALLY PUTS THE "HAG" IN "HAGGLE."



SO WHO SHOULD GO FIRST?

GO FIRST?

SPECULATING. ABOUT BUFFY AND ANGEL. WILLOW SUGGESTED IT AND IT SOUNDS LIKE FUN.



SPECULATE? PFFF! WHO NEEDS TO SPECULATE? WE BOTH KNOW EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED BETWEEN THOSE TWO.

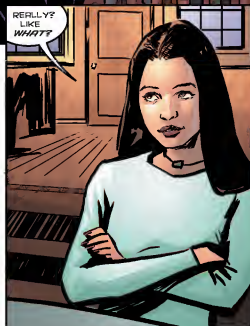


"XANDER?
WHAT'S
THAT?"

"THEIR
CLOTHES."

"OH I GET
IT. THEY
ARE BEING
DISCARDED
IN THE
HASTE OF
PASSION."

"I GOT
HERE
LATE.
WHAT
IS IT?"



I'M SO PLEASED TO HEAR THAT YOU'VE BEEN RE-ANIMATED.

THANK YOU. YOU LOOK GOOD TOO.

"YEAH, THAT'S TOTALLY LIKELY."

"DON'T WORRY, DAWN. IT'S ABOUT TO GET COOL, I PROMISE."

YOU DIDN'T JUST CALL ME BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO SEE ME, DID YOU?

YES, I DID.

AND...?

AND I'M IN TROUBLE.

I THOUGHT I WAS HELPING HIM. HE CAME TO ME AS A CLIENT. HE SAID HE'D BEEN INVOLVED IN A DEMON CRIME RING. HE WAS TRYING TO GET OUT AND THEY WEREN'T LETTING HIM GO. I SAID I'D HELP.

HE LED ME INTO A FIGHT. I THOUGHT THEY WERE THE BAD GUYS--I REALLY DID.

THEY WEREN'T?

NOW THE GUY'S TAKEN OFF AND THERE'S THIS DEMON CRIME-LORD COMING AFTER ME. I GUESS SOMETIMES I'M JUST NOT AS SMART AS I THINK I AM.

"THAT SEEMS A LITTLE OUT OF CHARACTER, DOESN'T IT? I THOUGHT ANGEL WAS GENERALLY CONFIDENT AND VERY INTELLIGENT."

"ANYA, LET ME TELL IT, OKAY?"

I CAN HELP. TELL ME WHAT THE DEMON CRIME-LORD LOOKS LIKE.

BIG. KIND OF SKELETAL. AND HOT.



TOM
CRUISE
HOT OR
MICROWAVE
POPCORN
HOT?

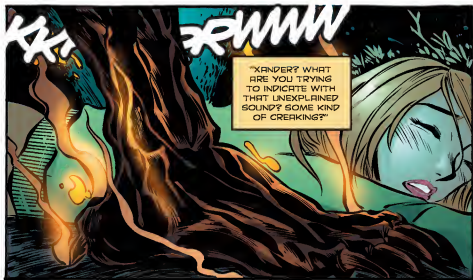
THE
SECOND
KIND. *HOT*
HOT.

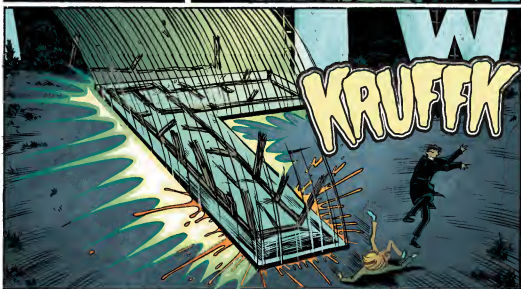
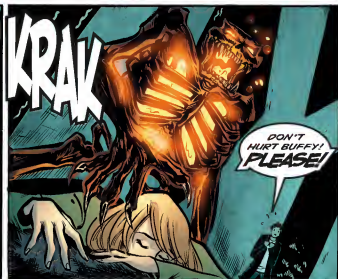
DID YOU
HEAR--

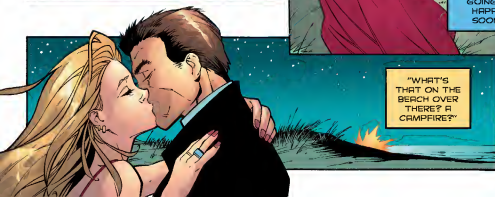
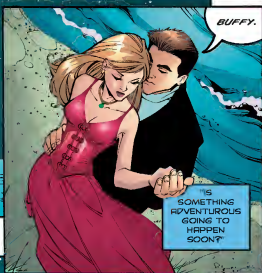
AAAAHHH!
IT'S BURNING
ME!

AND
THAT'S
THE GOOD
NEWS.

ARE YOU
READY?
BECAUSE
HERE...









WE'RE THE SAME NOW, ANGEL. I THINK WE CAN BE TOGETHER.

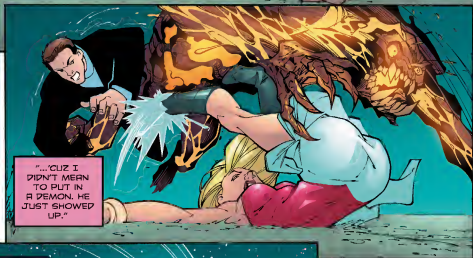




"THAT'S
THE SAME
DEMON
FROM MY
STORY."

"YEAH.
THAT'S
WEIRD..."

DON'T
TOUCH
HIM! IT'S
FIRE!
IT'LL KILL
YOU!



"...CUZ I
DIDN'T MEAN
TO PUT IN
A DEMON. HE
JUST SHOWED
UP."



"WHOA."

AAAAHHHRRRR!



"THE
WATER--
DOES
THAT
KILL IT?"

IT DOESN'T KILL IT. BUT IT MAKES IT SO THEY CAN FIGHT IT WITHOUT BURNING THEMSELVES TO DEATH. ANGEL GETS IT ONTO THE GROUND THEN BUFFY HACKS ITS HEAD OFF WITH A RAZOR-SHARP PIECE OF CLAMSHELL.

GEE. WOULD'VE BEEN NICE TO SEE THAT.

DAWN? YOU MEAN... DID THIS REALLY HAPPEN?

NO. IT'S JUST A STORY. BUT THE STORY... IT KIND OF **TOOK OVER**. I COULDN'T CONTROL IT. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ALL **ROMANTICAL**. NO CHOPPING OFF OF HOT DEMON HEADS.

BUT IT MAKES SENSE. I MEAN, **BUFFY AND ANGEL**. THAT'S WHAT THEY **DO**. ISN'T IT? MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT THEIR ENTIRE RELATIONSHIP WAS BUILT AROUND THE COOPERATIVE KILLING OF OTHERS.

I'M SURE WHATEVER HAPPENED HAD SOME OF THAT IN IT.

"NOW, BUFFY SAID THEY WERE GOING TO MEET BETWEEN HERE AND L.A.—THAT **HOLLYWOOD** SIGN WAS COMPLETELY WRONGS, XANDER. I THINK A CONVENIENT LOCATION WOULD BE THE DENNY'S IN OXNARD."

"DENNY'S?"

"THEY MAKE A NICE BURGER. JUICY."

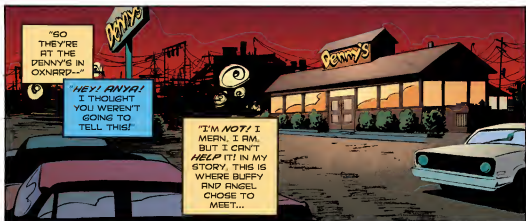
"WAIT! ANYA, STOP."

YOU CAN'T TELL THIS STORY!

DON'T WORRY, SWEETIE. I KNOW NOT TO TALK ABOUT SEXUAL INTERCOURSE IN FRONT OF DAWN. THAT'S NOT WHERE THE STORY'S GOING. REMEMBER, THERE'S KILLING JUST AROUND THE CORNER.

THAT'S NOT IT! IT'S THAT THERE'S SOMETHING GOING **WRONG** WITH THE STORIES! SOMETHING'S **CONTROLLING** THEM! WE HAVE TO FIGURE IT OUT!

OH. RIGHT. OKAY.



"SO
THEY'RE
AT THE
DENNY'S IN
OXNARD..."

"HEY! ANYA!
I THOUGHT
YOU WEREN'T
GOING TO
TELL THIS!"

"I'M NOT! I
MEAN, I AM,
BUT I CAN'T
HELP IT! IN MY
STORY, THIS IS
WHERE BUFFY
AND ANGEL
CHOSE TO
MEET..."



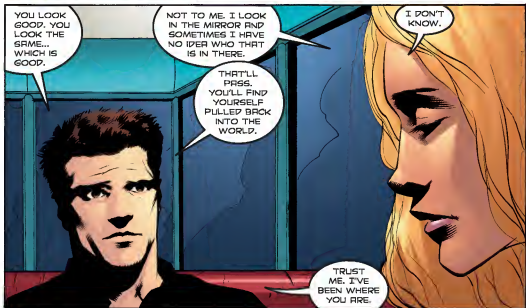
"THEY'VE
DECIDED
THAT THEY
NEED TO BE
SOMEPLACE
WHERE THEY
CAN REALLY
TALK..."



"I'M GLAD
WE CAME
SOMEPLACE
WHERE WE
CAN REALLY
TALK..."

"ALSO, THIS
BURGER IS
ESPECIALLY
JUICY."

"YES, WE
NEED THIS
MUCH MORE
THAN WE NEED
VIGOROUS
SEXUAL INTER-
COURSE."



"YOU LOOK
GOOD. YOU
LOOK THE
SAME...
WHICH IS
GOOD."

"NOT TO ME. I LOOK
IN THE MIRROR AND
SOMETIMES I HAVE
NO IDEA WHO THAT
IS IN THERE."

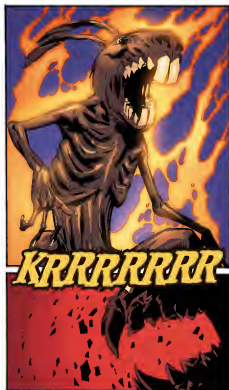
"THAT'LL
PASS.
YOU'LL FIND
YOURSELF
PULLED BACK
INTO THE
WORLD."

"I DON'T
KNOW."

"TRUST
ME. I'VE
BEEN WHERE
YOU ARE."













STOP!
WHAT?
I'M NOT
GETTING
ANY OF
THIS!



ARE YOU SAYING
THAT SOME DEMON
WAS MENACING
BUFFY IN STORIES
THAT CAME TO BE
OUT OF YOUR
CONTROL?

YOU GOT
THAT FROM
WHAT WE
SAID?

YOU'RE
REALLY
GOOD.



THIS COULD BE
VERY SERIOUS. IF
A DEMON HAS
INFILTRATED YOUR
SUBCONSCIOUSNESSES,
THAT IS A VERY CLEAR
AND POWERFUL
THREAT.

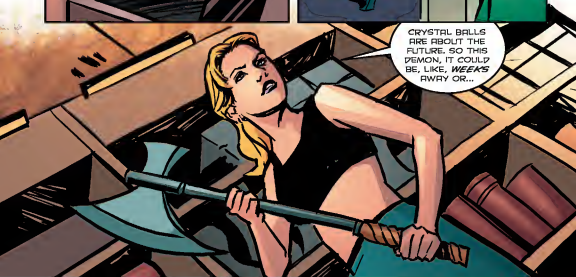
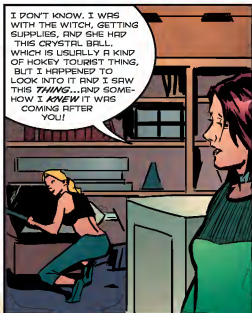
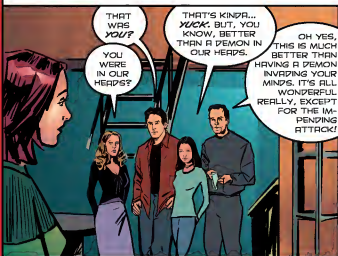
SUBCON-
SCIOUSNESSES?
NO WAY THAT'S
A WORD.

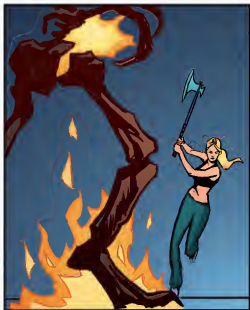


dingringring



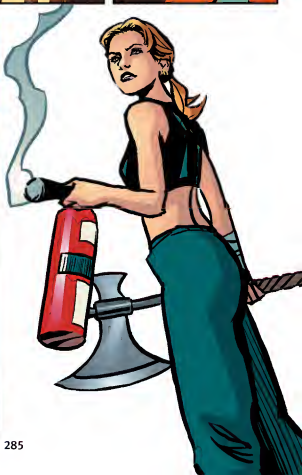
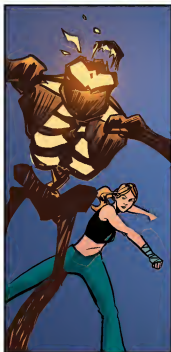
DID YOU
GET MY
MESSAGE?













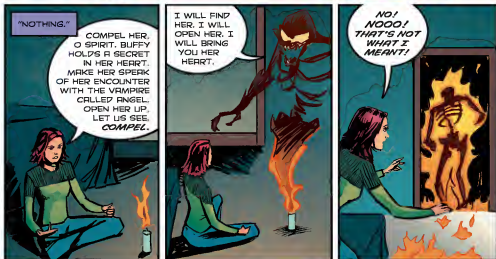
SO, DAWN, WHY ARE YOU TELLING ALL THESE STORIES ABOUT ME AND ANGEL?

UM... IS *THAT* WHAT WE SAID WE WERE DOING?

WILLOW?



WILLOW? THE INGREDIENT YOU WENT TO BUY... WHAT SPELL DID YOU DO, ANYWAY?



"NOTHING."

COMPEL HER. O SPIRIT. BUFFY HOLDS A SECRET IN HER HEART. MAKE HER SPEAK OF HER ENCOUNTER WITH THE VAMPIRE CALLED ANGEL. OPEN HER UP. LET US SEE. *COMPEL.*

I WILL FIND HER. I WILL OPEN HER. I WILL BRING YOU HER HEART.

NO! NOOO! THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT!



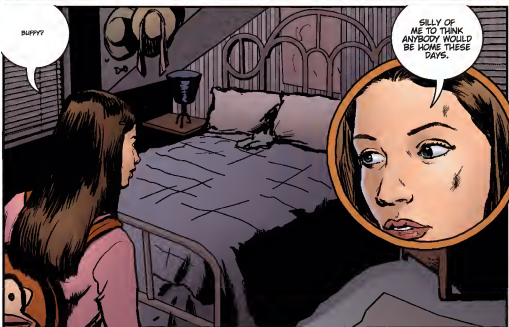
DOESN'T REALLY MATTER, ANYWAY. IT ALL TURNED OUT OKAY!

THE END

Withdrawal



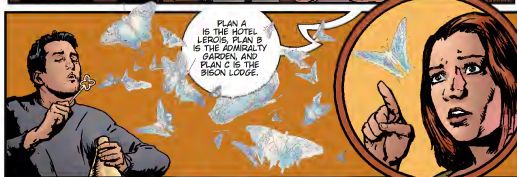


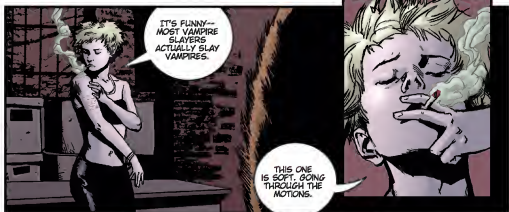
















I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT'S WHAT HE SAID ...
AH, YEAH, I THINK HE'S CUTE.

OH MY GOD, MELINDA, I TOTALLY **SHOULD** INVITE HIM TO COME OVER SOME NIGHT--IT'S NOT LIKE ANYONE IS EVER AROUND.

WAIT, I THINK I HEARD SOMETHING...



CRASHH



EEEEEEEEEE!



DAWN! DAWN!
ARE YOU OKAY?
DAWN, WHAT HAPPENED?
HELLO?



OH, WILLIAM.
WHAT HAVE
YOU GOTTEN
INTO?

WHO
THE--

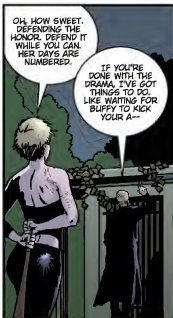
OH, IT'S YOU.
WHY AM I NOT
SURPRISED YOU
MADE IT OUT OF
THAT MESS WITH
THE GODDESS
OF TEARS.*

*BUFFY: CREATURES OF HABIT



SO, TELL ME.
THEY SAY SLAYER
BLOOD IS TASTY,
BUT WHAT'S YOUR
OPINION ON
SLAYER P--

HEY!
THAT'LL BE
ENOUGH OF
THAT.



OH, HOW SWEET.
DEFENDING THE
HONOR. DEFEND IT
WHILE YOU CAN.
HER DAYS ARE
NUMBERED.

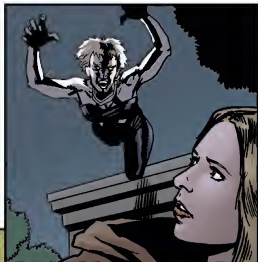
IF YOU'RE
DONE WITH THE
DRAMA, I'VE GOT
THINGS TO DO.
LIKE WAITING FOR
BUFFY TO KICK
YOUR A--

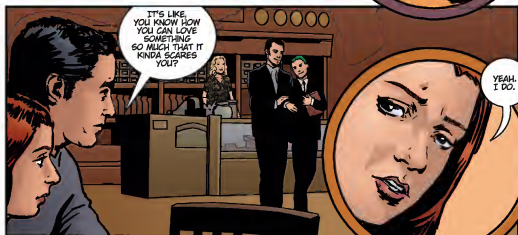


YOU DON'T GET
IT, DO YOU? IF ALL
I WANTED WAS HER
DEAD, SHE'D ~~BE~~ DEAD.
JUST LIKE I DID WITH
PARNASSUS, I PLAN ON
TEARING HER DOWN
COMPLETELY AND
PUBLICLY BEFORE
DEALING THE FINAL
BLOW.



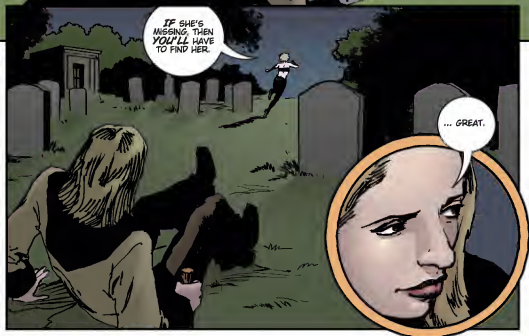
NOW
FOR YOUR
GIRLFRIEND.

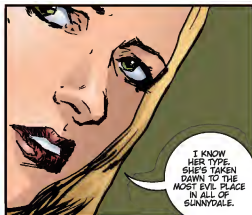
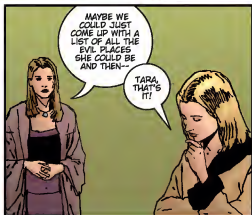
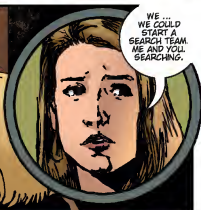


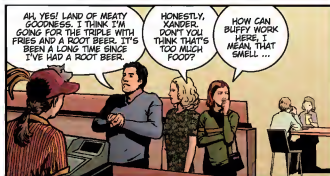








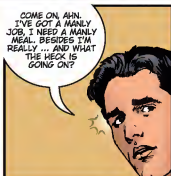




AH, YES! LAND OF MEATY GOODNESS. I THINK I'M GOING FOR THE TRIPLE WITH FRIES AND A ROOT BEER. IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE I'VE HAD A ROOT BEER.

HONESTLY, XANDER. DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S TOO MUCH FOOD?

HOW CAN BUFFY WORK HERE, I MEAN, THAT SMELL ...



COME ON, AHN. I'VE GOT A MANLY JOB. I NEED A MANLY MEAL. BESIDES I'M REALLY ... AND WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON?



YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT YOU DRAG ME ALL OVER TOWN, AND THEN WE COME HERE? WHAT ARE YOU, HUNGRY?

NO. WAITING.



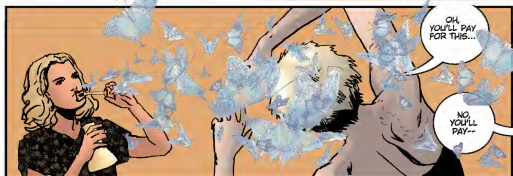
HEY, BIG AND UGLY! PUT HER DOWN! WHY DON'T YOU PICK ON SOMEONE YOUR OWN ... WELL, WHY DON'T YOU PICK ON ME?

XANDER! DON'T PROVOKE IT! YOU DON'T WANT TO GET BRUISED! THE PHOTOS!

DAWN! ARE YOU OKAY? WHAT'S GOING ON?

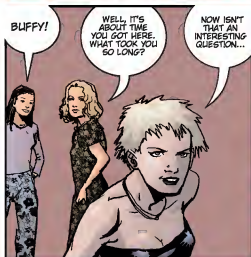
I'M SURE I DON'T KNOW! BUT I CAN TELL YOU THAT BUFFY'S GOING TO BE MAD WHEN SHE SEES OUR FRONT WINDOW. AND GUESS WHO SHE'S GONNA BLAME.







--FOR MY FRONT WINDOW. YOU KNOW HOW MANY DOUBLE SHIFTS I'LL HAVE TO WORK TO REPLACE THAT?



BUFFY!

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME YOU GOT HERE. WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG?

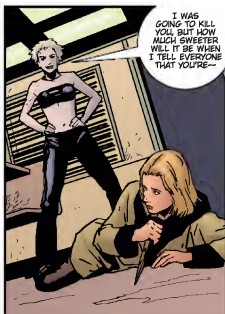
NOW ISN'T THAT AN INTERESTING QUESTION...



THEY DON'T KNOW, DO THEY?



NOT SUCH A TOUGH GUY NOW, ARE YA?



I WAS GOING TO KILL YOU, BUT HOW MUCH SWEETER WILL IT BE WHEN I TELL EVERYONE THAT YOU'RE--



NO...



SPIKE!

WHAT ...
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
HERE?

LET'S CALL
THAT OUR
LITTLE SECRET,
WHY DON'T
WE.

BUFFY ...
I DIDN'T USE
MAGIC. REALLY,
I DIDN'T...

I KNOW,
WILLOW. I'M
PROUD OF
YOU.



THE WINNER
AND STILL
CHAMPEEN ...
XANDER
HARRIS!

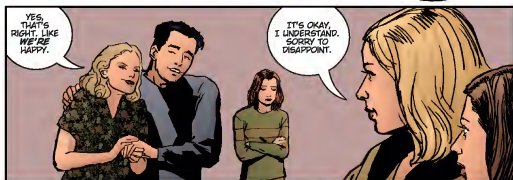
I'M GLAD
YOU'RE HERE.
I WAS
WORRIED ...

DAWN.
SHUSH. IT'S
OKAY. NOT
YOUR FAULT.

OH, AH,
I'M SORRY
ABOUT THE FRONT
WINDOW, BUT I
WAS JUST SITTING
THERE AND
THEN—

LOOK, I'M THE
ONE WHO SHOULD
BE SORRY. I KNOW
I HAVEN'T BEEN
AROUND MUCH
LATELY, AND,
WELL...

I'M JUST
SORRY.



NOTE FROM THE
UNDERGROUND



SUNWYDALE



A man and a woman are shown in a close embrace on a rooftop or balcony at night. The man, on the left, has dark hair and is wearing a dark suit with a white shirt and a dark tie. The woman, on the right, has short red hair and is wearing a dark, low-cut dress with a large fur collar. She is looking at the man with a slight smile. The background shows a city skyline with tall buildings and a crescent moon in the dark sky. The scene is framed by a thick red border.

TOK YHECHT
MROCHUME?

KRE LISK
FROE
BELSAN.

STEGJAR
FUSTRIPTUR
ASACKOMC.

hee
hee!

OH, MUGS...
I GET SO HOT
WHEN YOUSE
TALK ALL RUSSIAN
LIKE THAT.

THE
LANGUAGE
ISN'T RUSSIAN
--IT'S
CH'UHNSKRIT.

THE WORDS
WERE OLD WHEN
ATLANTIS WAS
STILL BEACH-
FRONT PROPERTY.

THAT'S ONE
THING ABOUT
NIGHTLIFE HERE
IN LOS ANGELES.

KNOW
THE
RIGHT
PLACES?

DARE TO
KNOCK
ON THE
RIGHT
DOORS?

YOU CAN
PRETTY
MUCH
FIND ANY-
THING.



DANTE'S INFERNO IS
A PERFECT EXAMPLE

HIDDEN BEHIND AN
ABANDONED STRIP
MALL OFF LA CIENEGA,
IT'S AN AFTERHOURS
CLUB SERVING A
CLIENTELE WITH A
TASTE FOR DEMONIC
DEGRADATION.

LUSTREK,
FRON
STEGLAR--

ENGLISH
ALREADY, YA MUG.
WHERE ARE YER
MANNERS?



APOLOGIES, I.

WE SAID,
"WELCOME, MR. STEGLAR
EXPECTS MEETING
YOU."

WOW.

NICE
PLACE.



WAY
HERE.

ANGEL,
THOSE POOR
WOMEN...?

DAEMON
EROTICUS--THEY
LIVE OFF THE
SEXUAL ENERGY
OF HUMANS.

BUT...THE
CHAINS?

THEY
MUST BE
VICTIMS OF
A SLAVE-
TRADE RING.
WE'LL INVESTI-
GATE AFTER
WE DO WHAT
WE CAME
HERE TO
DO, CORDELIA.
FOCUS.



CURIOUSLY,
GIRL?

MAYBE FILL
APPLICATION FOR
EMPLOYMENT--
HEH HEH.

UMMM...
NO
THANKS.







OH, TAKE
A FEW. THEY'RE
ON THE
HOUSE.

DON'T YOU
WANT TO SAMPLE THE
MERCHANDISE?

I'M A
RETAILER,
NOT A
CONSUMER.

BUT I NEED TO
KNOW WHERE
YOU'RE GETTING
YER SUPPLY.

SO
YOU CAN
CUT ME
OUT?

NOT HARDLY. SO I KNOW
YA AIN'T GONNA LEAVE
ME HOLDIN' AN EMPTY
BAG WHEN DROPPERS
KEEP COMIN' BACK
AFTER THEY'RE
HOOKED.

NEVER!



THEN
FORGET
IT.

MUGSY,
CALM DOWN.
DON'T BE SO
RASH.

I CAN
TELL YOU THIS
MUCH--THE
SOUL DROPS
ARE FRESH.
SHIPPED
DAILY...



...STRAIGHT
FROM THE
HELLMOUTH.

THE...HELL-
MOUTH?

YES. YOU
EVER HEAR OF
A PLACE CALLED...
SUNNYDALE?

...

VISIONS.

SUDDEN, VIOLENT,
GRAPHIC... THEY HAVE
PLAGUED CORDELIA
CHASE SINCE SHE
WAS BEQUEATHED
THEM BY THE
POWERS THAT BE.

RECENTLY SHE'S COME
TO SUSPECT IT WAS ALL
PART OF A BIGGER PLAN.

CORDELIA,
WHAT?!

NOT THAT
THEY HURT
ANY LESS.

IF I
HAVEN'T
SAID IT
RECENTLY...?

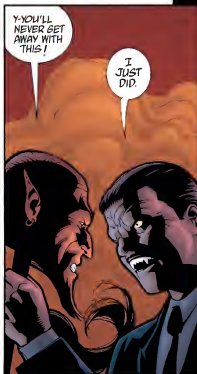
OW!

THUNK

THUK





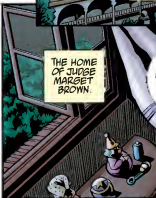




LIKE ANY GREAT CITY, LOS ANGELES HAS ITS MANY SIDES.

FOR EVERY DEMONIC STRIP JOINT--

--THERE'S A QUIET HOUSE IN BEVERLY HILLS.



THE HOME OF JUDGE MARGET BROWN.



YOU LITTLE ANGEL. EVERY NIGHT I THANK GOD FOR BRINGING YOU TO ME.



THAT'S NOT THE WAY I REMEMBER IT HAPPENING.

WHAT--?!



INVITE ME IN, MARGET.

WE HAVE TO TALK.



SOON.

YOU REALIZE
IF ANYTHING GOES
WRONG WITH THIS PLAN
OF YOURS, IT WILL COST
ME THE BENCH?

I COULD
EVEN GET
THROWN INTO
PRISON
MYSELF.

I REALIZE
I'M ASKING
A LOT.



I'M SORRY.

I'LL
FIND ANOTHER
WAY.

YOU'LL
DO NO SUCH
THING.



WHEN MY
DAUGHTER GOT
INVOLVED WITH
THAT PANGSEAN
ORGAN BLACK
MARKET--

--WHEN
SHE SOLD
THEM HER OWN
DAUGHTER TO
PAY FOR HER
ADDICTION--

--YOU WERE
THE ONLY ONE
I COULD
TURN TO.

ANGEL
INVESTIGATIONS
WAS THE ONLY
PLACE THAT
COULD HELP.

I WOULDN'T
EVEN HAVE MY
GRANDDAUGHTER
IF IT WEREN'T
FOR YOU,
ANGEL.



HELLO,
IT'S ME.

WAKE THE
GOVERNOR.



THE YOUNG
WOMAN KNOWN
AS FAITH WAS
NEVER A BIG
FAN OF SLEEP.

TOO
VULNERABLE.

WHO NEEDS ALL THOSE
SUBCONSCIOUS THOUGHTS
ROILING UNFETTERED
THROUGHOUT YOUR
BRAIN PAN ALL NIGHT?

AND
THAT WAS
BEFORE SHE
WAS CALLED.

BEFORE SHE WAS
CHARGED BY THE
WATCHERS COUNCIL
WITH THE ANCIENT
VOCATION: SLAYER.

BEFORE THE MURDER OF
AN INNOCENT MAN--AND
THE CONSEQUENCES
SHE ACCEPTED WHEN
SHE TURNED HERSELF IN
TO THE AUTHORITIES.

BEFORE HER
FALL FROM GRACE.



...AND HER STRUGGLE FOR REDEMPTION.

!

IT'S BARELY A GASP.

FAITH HAS NEVER BEEN ONE FOR EXCLAMATIONS.

SHE'D RATHER KEEP IT TO HERSELF.

EVERYTHING'S COOL.

FIVE BY FIVE.



FAITH--
BAD DREAM
AGAIN?

YEAH, OMEKA.
SORRY TO WAKE
YOU.

GO BACK
TO SLEEP--
I'M FINE.



I ONLY SHARE
THIS CELL A WEEK,
FAITH. BUT YOU
ARE NOT FINE.

LET ME TAKE
YOU TO PRISON
PSYCHOLOGIST.

HE HELP YOU
TAME YOUR
DEMONS.

THAT'S...
ALMOST
FUNNY.



SHARE, FAITH.
TELL ME WHAT
PAINS YOU--

FRONT
AND CENTER,
FAITH.



IF THIS IS ABOUT THE STAFF SLUMBER PARTY, FORGET IT.

LIKE I TOLD THE FIRST GUARD THAT TRIED IT, I DON'T SWING THAT WAY.

WATCH YOUR MOUTH, GIRL, OR YOU'RE GONNA FIND IT HARD TO SLEEP WITH A NIGHTSTICK SHOVED--



OFFICER BENSKI, PLEASE. YOU KNOW FAITH HERE IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE YOUNG CHARGES

WHICH IS WHY IT IS SO PAINFUL FOR ME TO SAY GOODBYE

I'M... LEAVING?



FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS, APPARENTLY.

BUT THEN YOU'LL BE BACK, FAITH AND YOU'LL BE ALL MINE

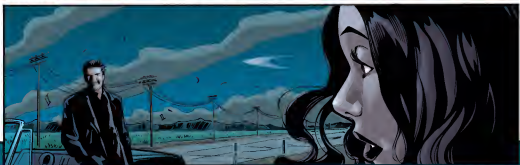
I MIGHT BE BACK--



--BUT I'LL NEVER BE YOURS.

AND FOR THE HUNDREDTH TIME TODAY...

SHE HAS TO REMIND HERSELF WHY SHE SUBJECTS HERSELF TO THIS.

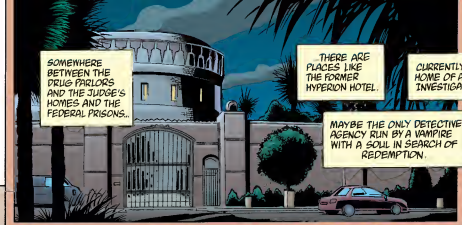


THEY SAID I WAS
REMANDED TO YOUR
CUSTODY--FOR
TWENTY-FOUR
HOURS?

I'LL EXPLAIN
ON THE WAY. I
HAVE TO ASK
YOU TO
TRUST ME.

ALWAYS.





SOMEWHERE
BETWEEN THE
DRUG PARLORS
AND THE JUDGE'S
HOMES AND THE
FEDERAL PRISONS...

THERE ARE
PLACES LIKE
THE FORMER
HYPERION HOTEL.

CURRENTLY THE
HOME OF ANGEL
INVESTIGATIONS.

MAYBE THE ONLY DETECTIVE
AGENCY RUN BY A VAMPIRE
WITH A SOUL IN SEARCH OF
REDEMPTION.

A SEARCH THAT
IS ALTERNATELY
AIDED AND COMPLICATED
BY THE GROUP HE'S
ASSEMBLED SINCE HIS
ARRIVAL IN THIS SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA CITY.

THIS IS
CRAZY! YOU ARE
OUT OF YOUR
MIND IF YOU THINK
WE'RE LETTING
YOU GO THERE
ALONE!

GUNN IS
RIGHT, ANGEL. IF
SOMETHING TOOK
DOWN BUFFY ON HER
OWN--MAYBE YOU'D
BE DOING HER A
FAVOR BY
BRINGING HER
MORE BACK-UP.

IF ANGEL
THINKS HE CAN
HANDLE THIS
PRINCESS--IT IS
NOT GOOD
PLACE TO
ARGUE.

INSTEAD
OF LESS.

YOU
REALLY
SHOULD
LET US
HELP.



ENOUGH, PEOPLE. WE'RE BURNING MIDNIGHT OIL HERE WHILE BUFFY'S IN WHO KNOWS WHAT KIND OF TROUBLE.

WE DON'T KNOW THAT FOR SURE. IT COULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF THOSE FUTURE VISION THINGIES.

SHE MAY BE FINE, FOR NOW.

WHAT IS THIS, A DEMOCRACY? I THOUGHT YOU GUYS WORKED FOR ANGEL--NOT THE OTHER WAY AROUND.

CORDELIA'S VISION SHOWED FAITH AND ME ON OUR WAY TO HELP.

IT'S WHY I GOT HER OUT OF PRISON, AND IT'S WHY WE'RE GOING.

ALONE.



THAT'S A TOTAL STEAMING HEAP OF AN EXCUSE, ANGEL!

EITHER WE'RE IN THIS TOGETHER OR NOT AT ALL!



FAITH?!

STOP TELLING ANGEL WHAT TO DO-- WHILE YOU STILL HAVE A TONGUE IN YOUR HEAD!

YOU THINK I'M SCARED OF YOU, HALF-PINT?

NO, YOU'RE PROBABLY TOO STUPID TO BE SCARED OF ME!



THIS ISN'T HELPING

OH, I'M SORRY, "PRINCESS." I SUPPOSE WE CAN SIT ON OUR BUTTS UNTIL YOU HAVE ANOTHER SEIZURE. ANOTHER CRYPTIC DREAM SEQUENCE IS JUST THE THING WE NEED.

THERE'S NO ACCOUNT TO TALK TO THE PRINCESS THAT WAY!

SOME- TIMES IT WAS SO MUCH QUARTER IN PYLOR.

SOON...

NICE FRIENDS
YOU HAVE
THERE

THEY'RE
A GOOD
BUNCH.

JUST A BIT
...WILLFUL.

MAKES ME THINK I
SHOULD BAG THIS WHOLE
"REDEMPTION"
GIG IN JAIL.

FAITH...

DON'T WORRY,
DON'T WORRY--I KNOW I'M
GOING BACK WHEN ALL THIS
IS OVER.

I'M JUST SAYING,
LOOK AT YOU. YOU'VE
GOT, WHAT--TWO
HUNDRED-PLUS YEARS
OF BLOODLETTING
TO MAKE UP FOR?

MAYBE...
MAYBE YOU WOULDN'T
MIND SOME HELP, IS
ALL I'M SAYING.

I MEAN,
I AM A
SLAYER.

SHOULDN'T I
BE SLAYING?

SEVERAL
HUNDRED
MILES
AWAY...

...IN A DARKENED
CORNER OF THE
CITY OF
SUNNYDALE...

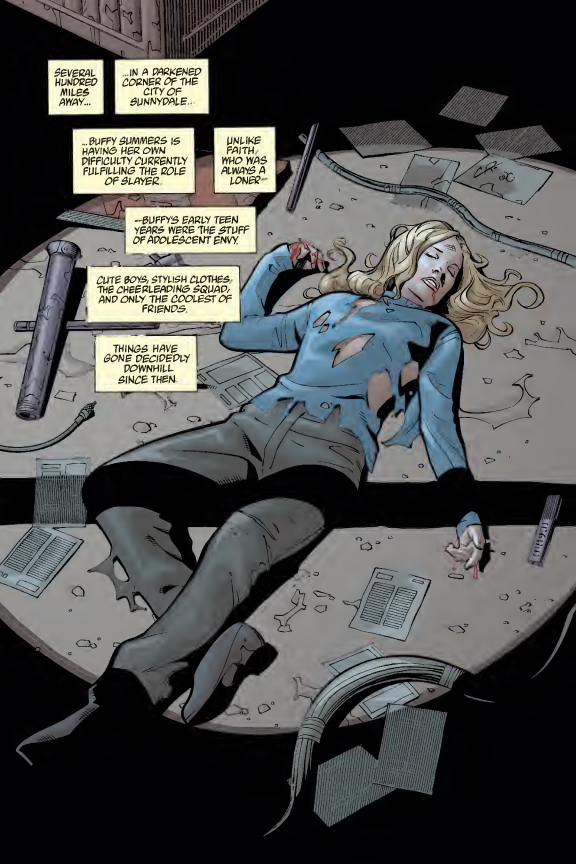
...BUFFY SUMMERS IS
HAVING HER OWN
DIFFICULTY CURRENTLY
FULFILLING THE ROLE
OF SLAYER.

UNLIKE
FAITH,
WHO WAS
ALWAYS A
LONER

--BUFFY'S EARLY TEEN
YEARS WERE THE STUFF
OF ADOLESCENT ENVY.

CUTE BOYS, STYLISH CLOTHES,
THE CHEERLEADING SQUAD,
AND ONLY THE COOLEST OF
FRIENDS.

THINGS HAVE
GONE DECIDEDLY
DOWNHILL
SINCE THEN.

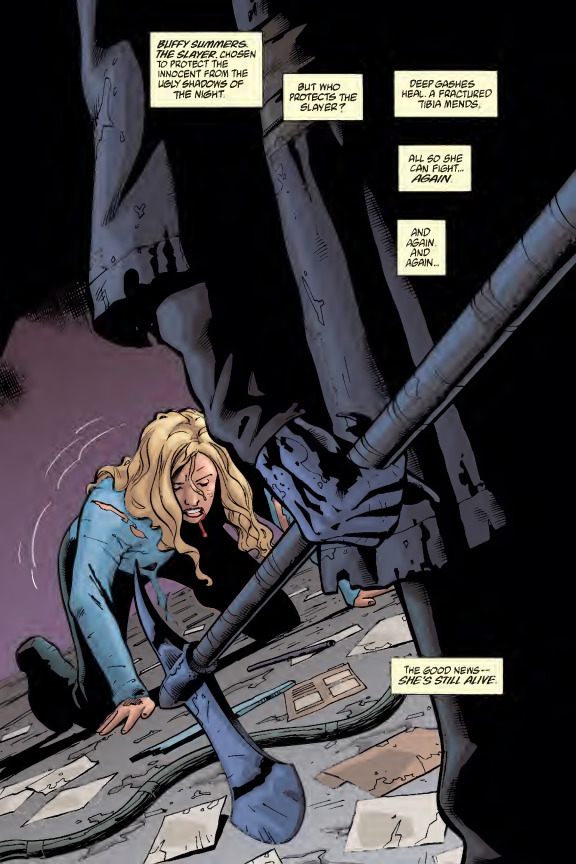






HOLD ON,
BUFFY--

--HELP
IS ON ITS
WAY.



BUFFY SUMMERS.
THE SLAYER. CHOSEN
TO PROTECT THE
INNOCENT FROM THE
UGLY SHADOWS OF
THE NIGHT.

BUT WHO
PROTECTS THE
SLAYER?

DEEP GASHES
HEAL. A FRACTURED
TIBIA MENDS,

ALL SO SHE
CAN FIGHT...
AGAIN.

AND
AGAIN.
AND
AGAIN...

THE GOOD NEWS--
SHE'S STILL ALIVE.



SHE'S BEATEN
DOWN TWENTY-SIX
CHALLENGERS
IN FOUR DAYS

SOON-TO-BE
NUMBER
TWENTY-SEVEN
IS NAMED
SAN SUI.

THOUGH THAT
HAPPENS TO BE
THE **BAD**
NEWS, TOO

WORD SPREAD AROUND
TOWN THAT A **DEMON**
GLADIATOR RING
HAD STARTED UP.

THEY TRACKED IT DOWN
TO AN UNDERGROUND
CHAMBER AT **SUNNYDALE**
UNIVERSITY, FORMER
OUTPOST OF THE COVERT
GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION
CALLED **THE INITIATIVE**.



AN ANCIENT
CHINESE
VAMPIRE SHE'D
DUSTED
YEARS AGO...

HE SHOULD
BE DEAD, BUT
SHE CAN'T
THINK
ABOUT THAT.



PROCESSES
THOUGHT INTO
MOTION.

IT'S THE ONLY
WAY SHE'LL
SURVIVE.

AND SHE
WILL
SURVIVE...



...BECAUSE
THEY
NEED HER.

XANDER,
CAN YOU SEE
ANYTHING?



UHM...
NEGATIVE
BUT I'M SURE
SHE'S OKAY,
DANN.

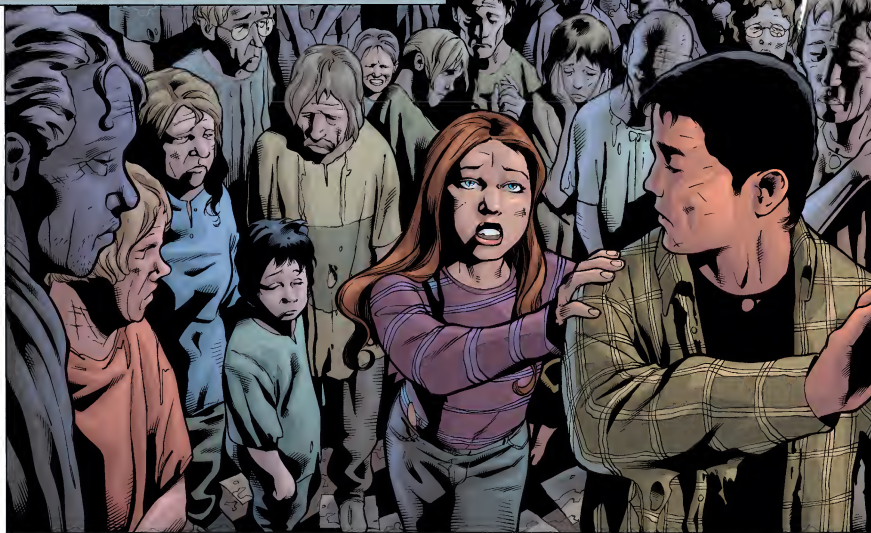
YOU'LL
SEE SCRAPPEY
000 ANY MINUTE
NOW--



--SHE'LL
COME BARGING
THROUGH THE WALL
WITH COMPLETE
DISREGARD FOR
EVERY RULE
MISS MANNERS
LIVES BY--

--HACK
A FEW DEMON
HEADS OFF,
AND RESCUE
US.

YOU
THINK?



I KNOW.





IS IT HER?

NO, BUT A
CLOSE SECOND
-TIME FOR
SLOP...!

"...WILL WE BE
HAVING ENTRAILS
WITH TOENAILS,
OR TOENAILS
WITH ENTRAILS?"

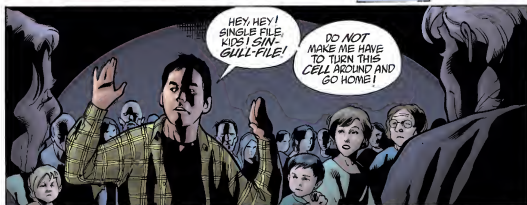


"UGH.
WHAT'S THE
DIFFERENCE?"

"AH,
TO

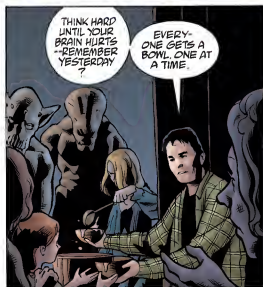
YOUR ADDOLESCENT
PALETTE, NOTHING,
BUT TO MY
WORLDLY TONGUE."

"YOU DID
NOT
JUST SAY..."



HEY, HEY!
SINGLE FILE,
KIDS! SIN-
GULL-FILE!

DO NOT
MAKE ME HAVE
TO TURN THIS
CELL AROUND AND
GO HOME!



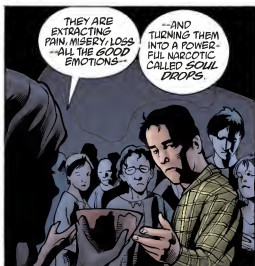
THINK HARD
UNTIL YOUR
BRAIN HURTS
-REMEMBER
YESTERDAY
?

EVERY-
ONE GETS A
BOWL, ONE AT
A TIME.



SO, ANYANKA, ANY-
THING INTERESTING ON
TODAY'S MENU?

IT IS
STILL
SLOP.







"WHAT'S
GOING ON
NOW?"

"WILD GUESS--
MORE FIGHTING."

*XANDER
HARRIS
DOESN'T
TELL
DAWN THE
TRUTH.*

HE RECOGNIZES THE
FISTS OF FURY THEATER
REJECT, BUT HE'S NOT
SURE FROM WHERE.

AFTER A WHILE, THE
DEMONS THEY FOUGHT
HAD ALL
STARTED
LOOKING
ALIKE.

HE TOOK
THEM FOR
GRANTED...



...JUST LIKE
HE TOOK
SOMETHING
ELSE FOR
GRANTED--

--THAT
BUFFY
WOULD
ALWAYS
WIN!

A close-up panel showing Buffy Summers on the right, wearing her signature blue jacket, looking intensely at a vampire on the left. The vampire has pale skin, sharp fangs, and glowing red eyes. Buffy's expression is one of determination and anger.

THEN
AGAIN...

A close-up panel showing Buffy Summers on the right, wearing her signature blue jacket, looking intensely at a vampire on the left. The vampire has pale skin, sharp fangs, and glowing red eyes. Buffy's expression is one of determination and anger.

XANDER CAN
TELL SOMETHING
IS WRONG.

A wide shot panel showing Buffy Summers in the center, surrounded by a large crowd of vampires. She is holding a glowing blue energy sphere. The scene is set in a dark, cavernous space with stalactites hanging from the ceiling.

THERE'S
SOMETHING
ABOUT
HER...

A close-up panel showing Buffy Summers on the left, wearing her signature blue jacket, looking intensely at a vampire on the right. The vampire has pale skin, sharp fangs, and glowing red eyes. Buffy's expression is one of determination and anger.

...THEY'D
RARELY SEEN
IT, ALWAYS
TALKED
ABOUT IT--

A close-up panel showing Buffy Summers on the left, wearing her signature blue jacket, looking intensely at a vampire on the right. The vampire has pale skin, sharp fangs, and glowing red eyes. Buffy's expression is one of determination and anger.

WHAT WOULD
HAPPEN IF
BUFFY GAVE
IN TO IT?

A close-up panel showing Buffy Summers on the left, wearing her signature blue jacket, looking intensely at a vampire on the right. The vampire has pale skin, sharp fangs, and glowing red eyes. Buffy's expression is one of determination and anger.

SURRENDERED
HERSELF TO
HER POWERS?
HER ANGER?



WHAT IF
SHE
STOPPED
BEING
BUFFY—

—AND JUST
BECAME THE
SLAYER?



MEANWHILE,
AT THE STORE
FORMERLY
KNOWN AS
THE MAGIC
BOX...

RETAIL
SUCKS.

WHATEVER
HAPPENED HERE,
FAITH... IT
WAS BAD.

SO THE
STRINGS YOU
PULLED TO GET
ME A "WEEKEND
PASS" FROM
JAIL WAS FOR
NOTHING?

I DON'T
KNOW...

I CAN MARK
SCENTS FROM
THE **DRIED
BLOOD**...

—MORE
THAN ONE
PERSON, A
MIX OF MEN
AND
WOMEN...

PROBABLY
ALL MY BEST
BUDDIES.
DID THEY
DIE HERE?



NO, BUT
THEY
FOUGHT
HERE.

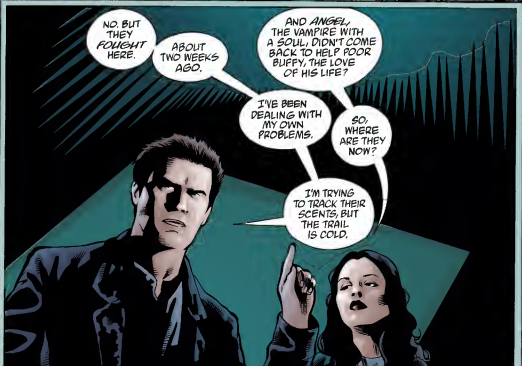
ABOUT
TWO WEEKS
AGO.

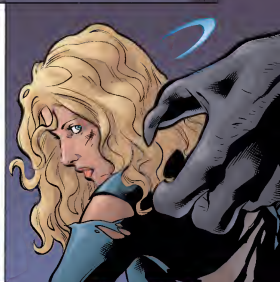
AND **ANGEL**,
THE VAMPIRE WITH
A SOUL, DIDN'T COME
BACK TO HELP POOR
BUFFY, THE LOVE
OF HIS LIFE?

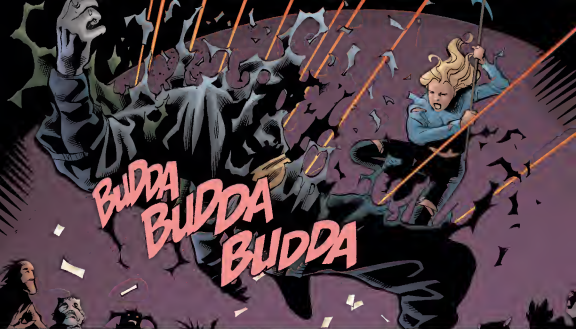
I'VE BEEN
DEALING WITH
MY OWN
PROBLEMS.

SO,
WHERE
ARE THEY
NOW?

I'M TRYING
TO TRACK THEIR
SCENTS, BUT
THE TRAIL
IS COLD.









IS BUFFY
OKAY?

YES.

WHO
WAS SHOOTING
A GUN?

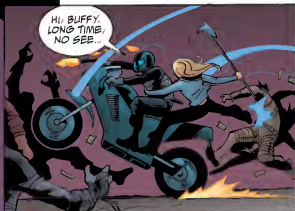


WELL, IT'S NOT
COMMANDER
XANDER WITH
THE KUNG-FU
GRIP, BUT IT'S
THE NEXT
BEST
THING--

--OUR
FAVORITE
SUPER-
SOLDIER,
AND I
DON'T MEAN
CAPTAIN
AMERICA!



NO
MATTER
WHAT...DO
NOT WET
YOUR
PANTS

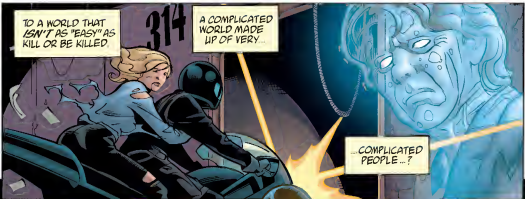




SHE FEELS THE LEATHER
SMELLS THE SCENT ON HIS
CLOTHES. FAMILIAR. SAFE.

SLOWLY SHE IS
DRAWN BACK...

...TO HUMANITY...



TO A WORLD THAT
ISN'T AS "EASY" AS
KILL OR BE KILLED.

A COMPLICATED
WORLD MADE
UP OF VERY...

...COMPLICATED
PEOPLE...?

MAGGIE
WALSH.

SHE RAN THE
INITIATIVE,
A GROUP OF
SOLDIER
BOYS WHO
USED THIS
CHAMBER TO
CAGE DEMONS--

--SO GOVERN-
MENT MAD
SCIENTISTS
COULD STUDY THEM.

BUT THEY
BROKE THE
PLACE UP--
AND WALSH
DIED.

BUT SO HAD
SAN SUI.

AND HADN'T
BUFFY DIED,
TOO?

TWICE.

COMPLICATIONS. SHE
SQUEEZES HER EYES SHUT.

SHE NEEDS TO KEEP THINGS
SIMPLE WHILE COMING DOWN
FROM THE BLOODLUST.



NO!

I DIDN'T
ASK TO BE
RESCUED!

WAIT,
YOU CAN'T
GO BACK
TO THAT
PLACE--

MY FRIENDS
ARE STILL
THERE.

MY
SISTER!

YOU'RE
HURT--
EXHAUSTED--
YOU CAN'T
BEAT THEM
ALL--

I'M
THE **SLAYER!**



STUBBORN.

RECKLESS.

FEARLESS.

YOU
HAVEN'T
CHANGED
A BIT.

ALL
RIGHT.
LET'S DO
IT.



SAY
AGAIN?

YOU
MIGHT'VE
FORGOTTEN--



--BUT
I SAID I'D
ALWAYS
HAVE YOUR
BACK.



THANKS,
RILEY.



HUH? OH,
THIS? YOU
ACTUALLY
KNOW THIS
RILEY
FINN
GUY?

I JUST
SCARFED
HIS CLOTHES
TO DO THE
EVEL KNEVEL
THING.

BUFFY
IT'S ME--

PIKE!





BUFFY?
HELLO?

WHY...
ANYONE
HOME?

NOT QUITE
THE REUNION
HE EXPECTED.

PIKE KNEW
BUFFY WHEN SHE
FIRST BECAME
THE SLAYER.

--CHOSEN TO PROTECT
INNOCENTS FROM
THINGS THAT GO
BUMP IN THE NIGHT.

THINGS HAPPENED.
SHE MOVED OUT OF
LOS ANGELES
...YADDA, YADDA...

TWENTY MINUTES
AGO HE RESCUED
BUFFY FROM AN
UNDERGROUND
DEMON ARENA
OF DOOM.

AND THAT'S ONLY
BEEN THE SECOND
WEIRDEST PART
OF THE NIGHT...

WATCHING BUFFY GO
FROM YOSEMITE
SAM TO DAN
QUAYLE...

...WITH
NO CLUE
WHY--

...WELL,
THAT WAS
NEIRD!

BUFFY--C'MON--
ARE YOU SORT OF
MEDITATING?

'CAUSE THE
LEAST YOU COULD
DO IS CLOSE
YOUR EYES--

--YOU ARE
FREAKING ME
OUT HERE...

BUFFY--?



OKAY.

S'COOL.
WE WAIT.

YOU
HAVE TO YES
A BIT, YOU
DO IT...



--I GOT
YOUR
BACK.

AND
THIS
TIME...

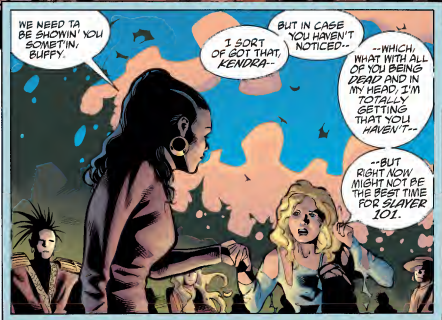
CHIK-
KLIK

--I'M NOT
RUNNING
AWAY.





Uhm...IS THIS, LIKE, A SLAYER INTERVENTION?



WE NEED TO BE SHOWIN' YOU SOMETHIN', BUFFY.

I SORT OF GOT THAT, KENDRA--

BUT IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED--

--WHICH, WHAT WITH ALL OF YOU BEING DEAD AND IN MY HEAD, I'M TOTALLY GETTING THAT YOU HAVEN'T--

--BUT RIGHT NOW MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST TIME FOR SLAYER 101.



OKAY,
SLURPEE HEAD-
ACHE...

E! CELEBRITY
PROFILE UNREELING
IN MY--IN OUR HEADS?
AND I GET TO
NARRATE?

THERE'S
ME IN L.A.
POPULAR
CHEER-
LEADER
BY DAY--



--VAMPIRE
SLAYER BY
NIGHT.

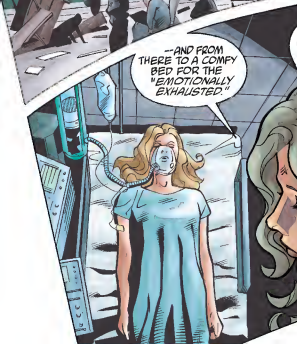


PIKE
HELPED ME
ASH A NEST OF
VAMPS, BURNED
THE SCHOOL
GYM
DOWN--

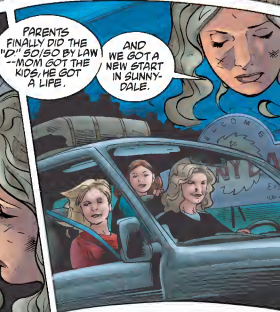


--GOT
KICKED OUT OF
SCHOOL--

--WENT
ON A ROAD TRIP TO
VEGAS--

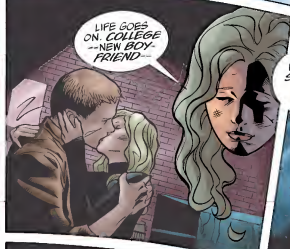
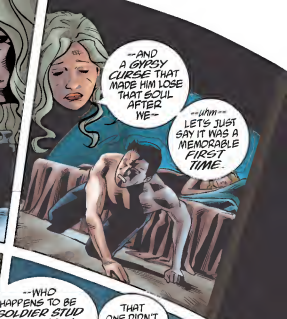
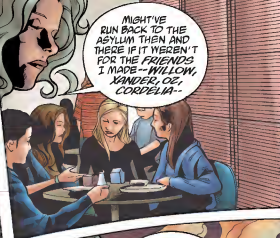


--AND FROM
THERE TO A COMFY
BED FOR THE
"EMOTIONALLY
EXHAUSTED."



PARENTS
FINALLY DID THE
"D" 50/50 BY LAW
--MOM GOT THE
KIDS, HE GOT
A LIFE.

AND
WE GOT A
NEW START
IN SUNNY-
DALE.







THERE'S ALL THE MORE REASON WE SHOULD STICK TOGETHER.

HUH?



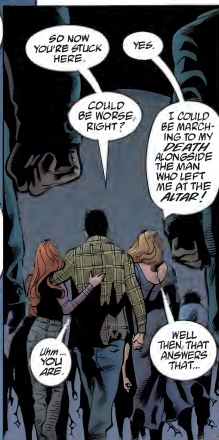
ANYA? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU WERE OUR INSIDE TRACK TO FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOING ON.



I DROPPED MY DEMON-FORM FOR A SECOND-- BECAUSE IT REALLY MAKES MY FORE-HEAD ITCH--

--AND THE SCOURGE SAW ME--AND WELL, THEY DON'T LIKE HUMANS--OR SUB-HUMANS--OR HALF-HUMANS--OR ANYTHING WITH THE WORD HUMAN IN IT--VERY MUCH.



SO NOW YOU'RE STUCK HERE.

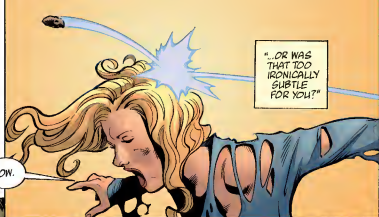
YES.

COULD BE WORSE, RIGHT?

I COULD BE MARCHING TO MY DEATH ALONGSIDE THE MAN WHO LEFT ME AT THE ALTAR!

UHM... YOU ARE.

WELL THEN THAT ANSWERS THAT...



"...OR WAS THAT TOO IRONICALLY SUBTLE FOR YOU?"

OW.

MY LIFE, MY MEMORIES--NO ROCK UPSIDE THE HEAD!

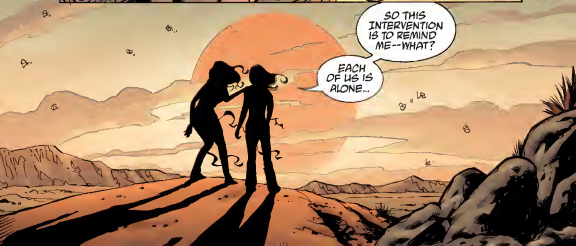
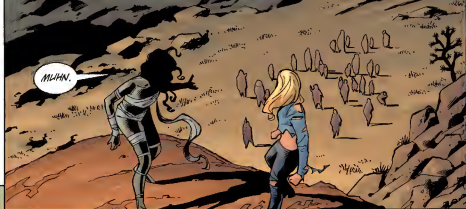
THEN AGAIN, MAYBE THE SMACK LED TO A CONCUSSION WHICH LED TO AMNESIA...

...BECAUSE I DEFINITELY WOULD'VE REMEMBERED *FLINTSTONES* BY WAY OF *VAN GOGH*.

SEE, MOM, SOMETIMES I WAS PAYING ATTENTION...

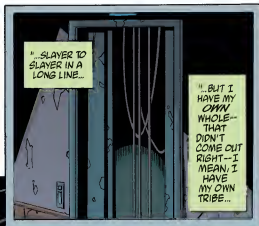








"...BUT WERE A
PART OF A WHOLE..."



"...SLAYER TO
SLAYER IN A
LONG LINE..."

"...BUT I
HAVE MY
OWN
WHOLE--
THAT
DIDN'T
COME OUT
RIGHT--I
MEAN, I
HAVE
MY OWN
TRIBE..."

"...AN EXTENDED
FAMILY THAT FIGHTS
TOGETHER..."

"...AND NEVER
TURNS ITS BACK
ON EACH OTHER..."

PARTY
WENT DOWN HERE!
CHEEZ-WHIZ AND
HAND-GRENADES

I LET
HER DOWN,
ANGEL.

WHO,
BUFFY? YOU
WERE IN JAIL,
FAITH.

THERE
WAS NOTHING
YOU COULD'VE
DONE.



THAT'S
THE
POINT--
I'M A
SLAYER!

I KNOW
WHY I WENT
TO PRISON--THE
THINGS I HAVE
TO MAKE
UP FOR--

--BUT I CAN'T HELP
FEELING I COULD BE
DOING SO MUCH *MORE*
TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
ON THE OUTSIDE!



THAT'S
WHAT
SHE
DOES
TO US,
ISN'T
IT?

MAKES US
BELIEVE
WE
CAN
BE
BETTER...?

NO.

GETS PRETTY FRUSTRATING,
DON'T IT?

DON'T FEEL BAD
ABOUT IT.



IS IT
OKAY IF I
FEEL BAD
ABOUT
THIS
INSTEAD
?



*THE
SCOURGE?!*

KNOW 'EM,
HUH?

YUP.

BAD?

DEFINE
"BAD."

BAD CAN
KICK MY ASS.
ANYTHING ELSE
--NOT SO
BAD.

THEN IN THAT
CASE, THEY MAKE
BAD LOOK LIKE
TELETUBBIES.

SEE,
NOW I'M
SCARED..

"...THAT'S THE
KIND OF IMAGE
THAT STAYS IN
YOUR HEAD..."

OKAY,
NICE TRY, BUT
BEEN THERE
AND DONE
THAT--

--AND
THIS IS NOT
THE "LIGHT
AT THE END
OF THE
TUNNEL."



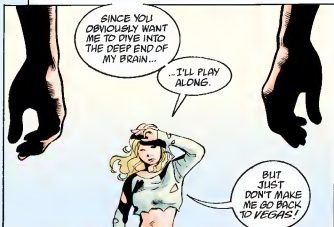
NOT
HEAVEN,
THANK
YOU.



SINCE YOU
OBVIOUSLY WANT
ME TO DIVE INTO
THE DEEP END OF
MY BRAIN...

...I'LL PLAY
ALONG.

BUT
JUST
DON'T MAKE
ME GO BACK
TO VEGAS!



OKAY...DON'T
KNOW YOU--
OR YOU--OR
YOU.

I THINK
YOU HOOKED
ME UP TO THE
WRONG PARTY
LINE.

IS THIS THE
SUMMERS FAMILY
REUNION?

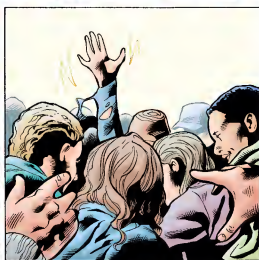
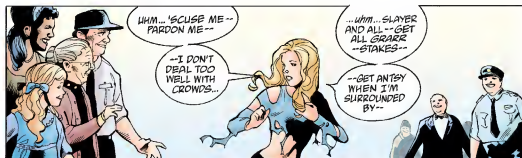


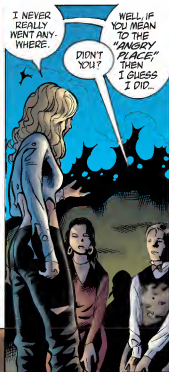
NO. COULDN'T
BE. YOU'RE ALL
TOO HAPPY.

OF COURSE,
THERE WAS MY
DAD'S UNCLE
MORRIS.

BUT
HIS HAPPY WAS
PHARMACEUTICAL,
SO HE DOESN'T
COUNT.









...SAVING...

AND IT
TALKS.



WELCOME
BACK.

SORRY
ABOUT THAT.
BUSINESS
MEETING
GOING ON
IN MY
HEAD.

HMM.



SO--?

WHOEVER
IS BEHIND
THIS PUSHED
ME ON
PURPOSE--



--LIKE THEY
WANTED ME
TO GO RAMBO
AND LOSE
CONTROL.

I DON'T
KNOW WHY,
BUT IT DIDN'T
WORK--

--WELL,
IT DID WORK,
BUT I'M
BETTER
NOW.



AND YOU'RE
GOING BACK
THERE TO
FIND OUT WHO
DID IT.

YEAH. BUT
YOU KNEW
THAT
ALREADY,
HUH?

I HAVE NO
CHOICE, PIKE. IT'S
WHO I AM. WHAT
I DO. AND MOST
OF ALL...



"...MY FAMILY
NEEDS ME."

AT
LEAST NOW
WE KNOW WHAT
THE PIPELINE
IS.

SPICY
HUMANS GO
IN. BLACK-
MARKET
DRUGS COME
OUT.



GUYS--
WHAT DO
WE DO?

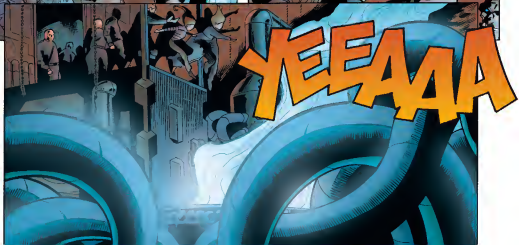
I EXPECT
WRITE ABOUT
IN HORRIFYING
PAIN UNTIL WE
EVENTUALLY
DROWN OR
PERHAPS
BOIL TO DEATH.

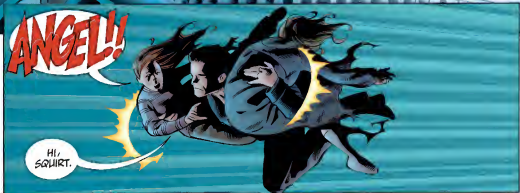
OH.

SEE, LOVE
YOU, MONEY, BUT
NOT THE ANSWER
SHE WAS
LOOKING FOR.



LOVE
ME--?







CLEAR
AHEAD!

AND
BEHIND
THIS IS
WEIRD.

WHY
HAVEN'T
THEY CHASED
US?



THERE'S YOUR
ANSWER--



MORE
LIKE ONE BIG
TRAP--

IT'S
FALLING
APART!

--BUT IT
WASN'T LIKE THIS
BEFORE!

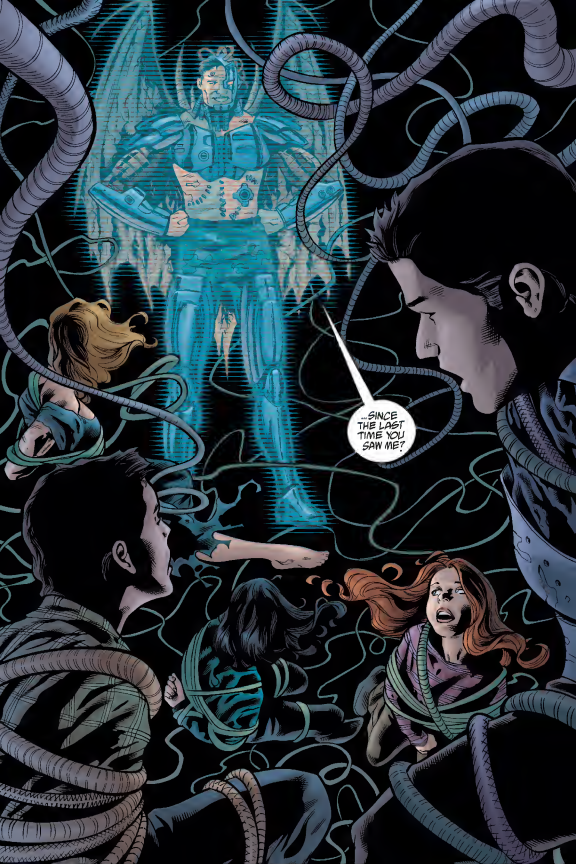


THE
SCOURGE
COULDN'T
HAVE REBUILT
THIS ENTIRE
PLACE.

SO WHO
COULD?

XANDER HARRIS, I
AM DISAPPOINTED.

HAVE I
CHANGED THAT
MUCH...



...SINCE
THE LAST
TIME YOU
SAW ME?

OOOH,
MULTIPLE CHOICE.
I NEVER WAS GOOD
WITH THAT WHOLE
STANDARDIZED
TEST THING--

-- 'CEPT
DID I MENTION
HOW WELL I
DID ON MY
SATS--?

--BUT
REALLY, THAT'S
NOT IMPORTANT,
LET'S LOOK AT
WHAT WE HAVE
HERE.--

A) FIGHT
ME AND YOU
DIE.

OR B)
GIVE ME YOUR
WEAPON--

--TAKE ME
THROUGH THE
INITIATIVE TUNNELS
TO THE SCOURGE'S
LIFEFORCE-SUCKING
MACHINE--

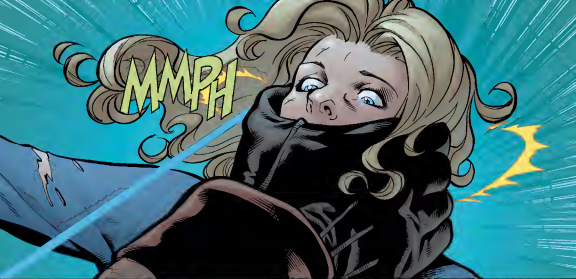
--HELP
ME FREE MY
FRIENDS--

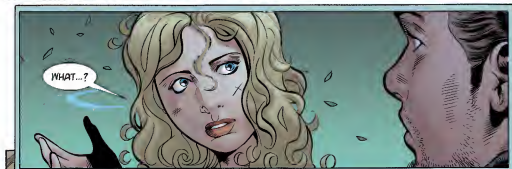
--AND STOP
YOUR SUPERIORS
FROM KILLING ALL
OF HUMANITY.

OR THE
EVEN-ACCEPTABLE
C) STAND ASIDE AND
LET ME BY.











INTO
EVERY
GENERATION,
A SLAYER
IS BORN.

ONE
GIRL, IN ALL
THE WORLD,
A CHOSEN
ONE

ONE BORN
WITH THE
STRENGTH AND
SKILL TO
HUNT THE
VAMPIRES.

HMM...
WHADDYA KNOW,
NOTHING ABOUT
DEMONS—

"--MAYBE WE CAN JUST
DITCH THE OTHERS..."

ANYONE
SEE "BUTCH
CASSIDY
AND THE
SUNDANCE
KID"?

ACTUALLY,
AT THE ZIEGFELD
WHEN IT FIRST
CAME OUT.

UHM... FAITH--
ANGEL-- FOR THE
SAKE OF THOSE OF
US WHO HAVEN'T
BEEN BITTEN BY
A RADIOACTIVE
SPIDER--

"CAN YOU
TWO BE A BIT MORE...
RESPECTFUL?"

XANDER
IS RIGHT!

MY
VENGEANCE
ACCOUNTANT
ALWAYS SAID,
"YOU CAN CATCH
MORE FLIES WITH
EXPOSED
INTESTINES
THAN SPLATTERED
BRAIN
MATTER."

AND
THANK YOU,
ANNA, FOR THAT
EXCERPT FROM
MARTHA STEWART'S
DEMON QUOTE
BOOK...

IF MY
SISTER WERE
HERE, SHE'D
KICK YOUR
BUTTS IN--
AGAIN!

THE
CAPACITY FOR
HUMANS TO REBEL
AGAINST ORDER
NEVER CEASES
TO-- AMUSE
ME...

BUT
YOUR SISTER
WILL NOT SAVE
YOU THIS
DAY.

WE HAVE
PLANNED THIS
OPERATION TOO
WELL.

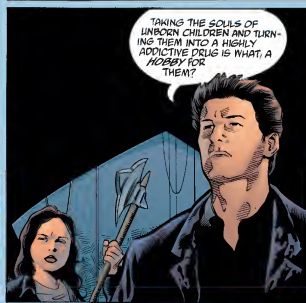


WHEN I FIRST FOUND THE SCOURGE, I ADMIRER THEIR ADHERENCE TO STRUCTURE AND ORDER--

--YET THEY WERE SO LACKING IN VISION.

THEIR PROGRAM--OR PROGRAM, IF YOU WILL--OF SPECIES SEPARATION IS A LIMITING ONE--

--WHICH, UPON ITS INEVITABLE COMPLETION LEAVES LITTLE TO WHILE AWAY THEIR DAYS.



TAKING THE SOULS OF UNBORN CHILDREN AND TURNING THEM INTO A HIGHLY ADDICTIVE DRUG IS WHAT, A HOBBY FOR THEM?

ANY SOULS WILL SUFFICE. THAT UNBORN CHILDREN RUMOR WAS JUST...GOOD MARKETING.

WE WANTED TO STIMULATE INTEREST. HUMANS WHO HAVE SUCH INCLINATIONS PREFER THEIR SINS AS DEBAGED AS POSSIBLE.

WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT HUMANS, YOU'RE A TALKING LIGHTBULB!

MOTHER--
DR. WALSH--
CREATED ME AS THE FIRST IN A NEW RACE OF HUMANS AND DEMONS.



BUT THE OLD RACES WOULD HAVE TO STEP ASIDE FIRST--

--AND CONQUERING HUMANITY WOULD HAVE CAUSED UNNECESSARY DECEIMATION.

SO YOU BUILD THE PIPELINE TO CREATE THE SOUL PROPS?

AND THEN SIT BACK AND LET MANKIND CONQUER ITSELF?

IT LACKS THE "GRINDING UNDER BOOTHEELS" MODEL PREFERRED BY MY ALLIES--

--YET ITS ELEGANCE MAKES UP FOR ITS DRAMATIC DEFICIENCIES.

THEN WHY BOTHER WITH THIS ARENA?

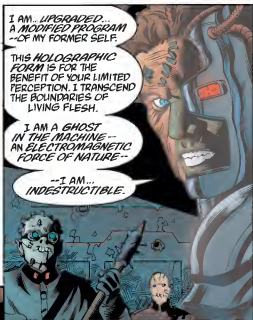
THE SCOURGE REQUIRE A DIVERSION. AND I REQUIRED A POWER SOURCE. IT SEEMED A LOGICAL SOLUTION.



THAT'S NOT LOGICAL, IT'S DUMB!

IXNAY ON THE UMBDAY.

NO, LOOK AT HIM--ADAM'S NOT EVEN REAL ANYMORE--HE'S DEAD!

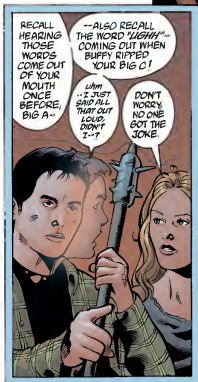


I AM... UPGRADED... A MODIFIED PROGRAM --OF MY FORMER SELF.

THIS HOLOGRAPHIC FORM IS FOR THE BENEFIT OF YOUR LIMITED PERCEPTION. I TRANSCEND THE BOUNDARIES OF LIVING FLESH.

I AM A GHOST IN THE MACHINE-- AN ELECTROMAGNETIC FORCE OF NATURE--

--I AM... INDESTRUCTIBLE.



RECALL HEARING THOSE WORDS COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTH ONCE BEFORE, BIG A--

--ALSO RECALL THE WORD "UGH" COMING OUT WHEN BUFFY RIPPED YOUR BIG C!

WHY--I JUST SAID ALL THAT OUT LOUD, DIDN'T I--?

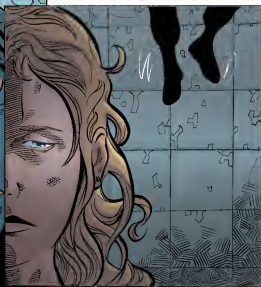
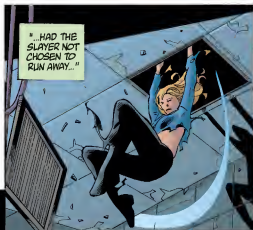
DON'T WORRY, NO ONE GOT THE JOKE.

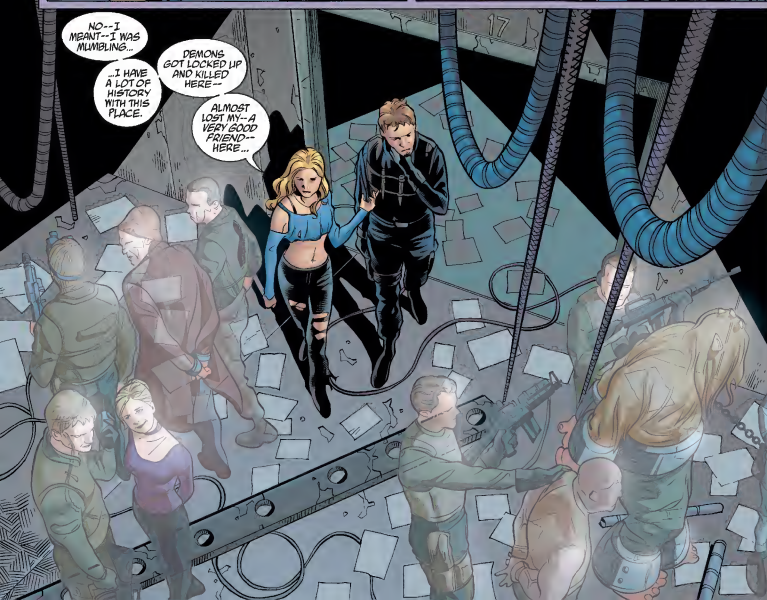
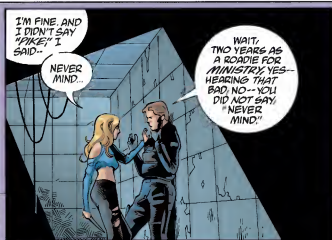
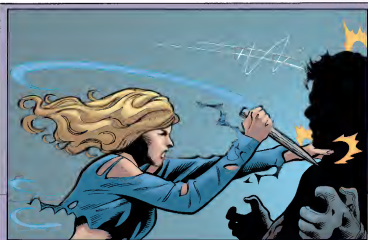


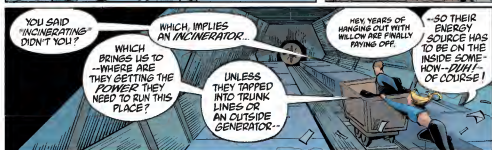
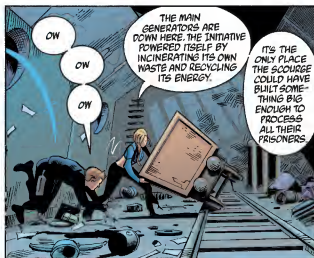
THE SLAYER MANAGED TO REMOVE MY URANIUM BATTERY BECAUSE SHE HAD ALSO BEEN... REPROGRAMMED --TEMPORARILY UPGRADED.

MY CURRENT OPERATING STATUS WILL PREVENT A RECURRENCE OF SUCH EVENTS.

OR IT WOULD...

















SO THANKS
FOR BABBLING

BUT I KINDA

FIGURED
OUT

YOUR
WEAKNESS
ALREADY.



IT IS NOT A
WEAKNESS,
SINCE THE FLESH
WILL ACT AS
EXPECTED.

DON'T TELL
ME, YOU
DID THE
MATH?



THE
STATISTICAL
PROBABILITY
OF ANYONE
CONVINCING
THEM TO
ACT OTHER-
WISE IS--

NUMBERS. FOGGY.
LET'S SEE HOW
THINGS WORK
IN REAL LIFE,
WHY DON'T WE?

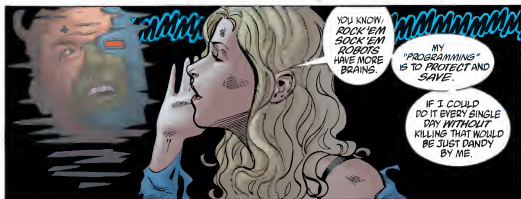


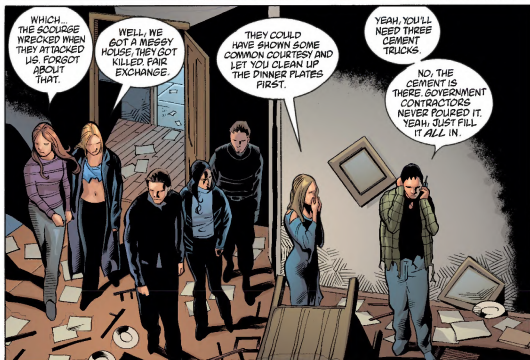
Whm--HI. HELLO.
REMEMBER ME?
HERE'S THE
DEAL, REAL
SIMPLE.

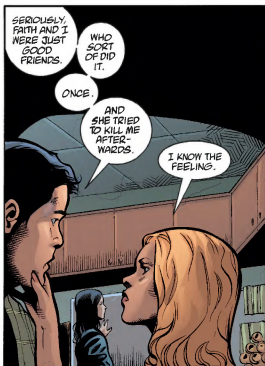
THE SCOURGE
ARE USING YOU!
BY KEEPING ALL
OF US FIGHTING
CONSTANTLY--

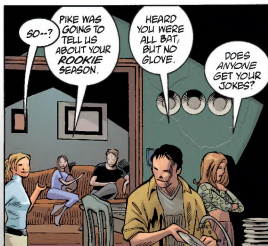
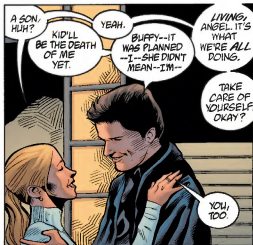
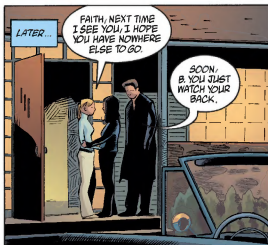
--THEY'VE
BEEN ABSORBING
ALL THE ANGER
AND FEAR
GENERATED BY
THE VIOLENCE
AND CHANNELING
IT TO POWER
THIS PLACE--

--AND TO
KEEP ADAM'S
PROGRAM
RUNNING!









THE END

Buffy

the vampire slayer™

OMNIBUS

Buffy is heartbroken following the tragic loss of her mother, but she can't mourn long, as the Hellmouth never sleeps. In Tom Fassbender, Jim Pascoe, and Cliff Richards's *Ugly Little Monsters*, the Slayer must contend with deformed demon children, a volatile teenage sister, and a love-struck vampire—Spike. Troubled by visions of monsters fought and of those to come, Buffy must sacrifice herself for Dawn, and her death takes a toll on the Scooby Gang. Without their Slayer, these close friends must band together and confront demons, reptilian sorcerers, and crazed forest creatures in stories written by Amber Benson (Tara), acclaimed *Buffy* novelist Christopher Golden, and television writer Jane Espenson, who presents the secret Season Six rendezvous between Buffy and Angel through the imaginations of the Slayer's closest friends. The original series reaches its grand finale with the gang reunited and going on a long trip to hell where Angel, Faith, and Oz return to Buffy's life.

Jam-packed with action and adventure featuring favorite characters from the television series, *Buffy Omnibus Volume Seven* explores Seasons Five and Six of the television show, leading into Joss Whedon's award-winning *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Season Eight comics.

